MAX
COMICS
PARENTAL ADVISORY
EXPLICIT
CONTENT
THE PUNISHER
BY GARTH ENNIS
ROBERTSON • LAROSA • FERNÁNDEZ • BRAITWAITE

THE
PUNISHER

The essential American soul is hard, isolate, stoic, and a killer. It has never yet melted.

— D.H. Lawrence

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INTRODUCTION

The first time I thought about the Punisher with any degree of seriousness was in September of 1988, during a panel discussion at UKCAC (the long-deceased United Kingdom Comic Art Convention). This was a few months before I began writing comics professionally, and was in fact the only convention I attended without being involved in the industry. The panel was entitled *Violence in Comics*, and I watched as half a dozen creative types debated the pros and cons of that very subject. All but one of them were British, the one in question being the writer/editor of Marvel Comics' *The Punisher*.

His take on the subject was a simple one. The Punisher was a violent character in a violent story, he said, but the violence neither made the world better nor relieved the character's torment. Frank Castle, the Punisher, was not a happy man and never would be. In short, he was careful to make clear when writing the book that violence solved nothing, at least in the long term.

What happened next was quite interesting. A couple of the other members of the panel stated quite plainly – with that breathtaking blend of condescension and arrogance that Brits always think plays well with Americans – that *The Punisher* was not even worthy of consideration in this particular discussion. They were talking on a different level. There was no need to waste time on *The Punisher*. So could they return to more serious matters, please? And, partly because these two weren't exactly producing *War and Peace* themselves – darlings of the British indie scene though they were – and partly because of their bloody awful manners, I found myself thinking...*hmmm*. That's why I decided to take a proper look at the Punisher.

I was aware of him, of course. As ignorant of most U.S. comics characters as I was, the Punisher was a hard one for me to miss: the white skull on the black suit, the permanently grim visage, the firepower. What I found when I looked more closely was interesting, although I have to admit it didn't exactly grab me. Nice art and some serviceable stories, maybe, but nothing really that memorable. And, with depressingly increasing frequency, these hard-boiled crime tales were ruined by the addition of costumed super heroes (truth to tell, the Punisher looked a bit like a super hero himself, with his white jackboots and giant skull motif). Not bad but not for me, I thought, and moved on.

All the same, there was potential.

* * * * *

Fast-forward ten years. I'd enjoyed a degree of success in the American comics market, mostly writing characters I'd created myself, and now Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti were asking me to revive the Punisher for their Marvel Knights line. I started by taking another look at the character, and despite a degree of stagnation (and outright nonsense) I saw signs of hope. Writer Chuck Dixon in particular had done good work. The costume was more or less gone, replaced with less-conspicuous civilian clothing. The skull was still there, but as a target rather than a symbol – its purpose being to draw a nervous shooter's aim away from Frank Castle's unarmored head. Thinking about it, I began to see the Punisher as resembling the British comics characters of my youth, and that turned out to be my way in.

This is perhaps not as surprising as it might seem. The characters in question, grim-faced gunfighters like *2000 AD*'s Judge Dredd and *Battle-Action*'s Dredger, were born of the 1970s – that uncertain era when TV and movies reflected society's growing unease with itself. Government, law and order, a nation's standing in the world, nothing could be comfortably relied upon anymore; and fiction such as *Dirty Harry* and *Death Wish* responded with protagonists who might provide a scrap of bleak and tattered hope in all the chaos. The action was vicious, the humor sardonic, the heroes themselves a brutal bunch, the justice they offered final and unyielding. The Punisher was of that time, too.

Which to my mind was actually quite a healthy development, at least in creative terms. Most comic-book characters are influenced only by other comic books, each super hero or super-team being essentially the same as the last, with only the costumes colored in differently. Suddenly throwing television, film and prose fiction into the mix helped stir things up and gave the stories an edge they badly needed. In the UK market this defined an entire decade, and resulted in what I believe are some of the greatest comics ever produced. Yet while there may have been other American characters so influenced, the Punisher is the only one to have stood the test of time. In fact, to this day, I like to think of Frank Castle as an essentially British character – born by a very happy accident on the wrong side of the Atlantic.

I wrote about fifty issues of *The Punisher* for Marvel Knights. Some of it's not bad. It went on too long, certainly longer than I meant it to, and it has an oddly goofy quality that reflected how I felt about the book at the time. I

certainly saw the Punisher himself as serious enough, but I populated the world he moved through with freaks and grotesques, and even the occasional super hero. Most of the stories were unlikely fare delivered with a knowing wink at the reader, and often you could hear the *Merrie Melodies* refrain playing somewhere in the background. The problem was, deep down, that I didn't see the Punisher as being worthy of serious discussion – just like the pair on the panel back in '88.

That would change.

* * * * *

Fast-forward a couple more years. I'd fallen in love with New York City the instant I first set foot there, and to see her brought so low on September 11th, 2001, was one of the most wretched experiences of my life. Accompanying the misery was a deep sense of foreboding. *The sun comes up tomorrow on a different world*, I remember thinking, and to a certain extent I was right: The hellish events would soon be used as the basis for a number of decisions taken by the U.S. government of the time, changes in policy both foreign and domestic, some hasty, some downright ill-considered. Yet not long afterwards I began thinking in different terms. The world was the same place, I reckoned, but America had suddenly been given a close-up look at what it was really like.

The continental United States had not directly known the touch of war for one hundred and thirty-six years. Now, inside a mere few hours, Americans experienced the devastation, loss, horror, heartbreak and uncertainty of human conflict in one massive, wrenching injection. What many regions of the planet tasted often or even daily was now all too obvious, and the U.S. was left reeling. That was something I wanted to write about. Not the specifics of the 9/11 terrorist attacks so much as the feeling of the world at its worst; that awful step into the dark after which things can never be the same. It didn't take me long to realize I had the perfect vehicle with which to explore such a notion: the Punisher.

With the full backing of editor Axel Alonso I conceived a new *Punisher* monthly, a comic book for adults, a title that would pull no punches. Super heroes and the madcap humor that accompanied them would be excised completely. Frank Castle himself was the perfect protagonist: He seemed not so much a man as a collection of slabs of meat, first physically and spiritually disassembled, then nailed back together with cold black iron. Ever-reliable, utterly constant, he would walk the grim paths I set him on without faltering. We would accompany him. We would take a long look into the dark and do our damndest not to blink.

I was very lucky when it came to the artists. Darick Robertson, Lewis LaRosa, Leandro Fernández, Doug Braithwaite and the incomparable Goran Parlov all produced superb work for the title. I got to collaborate with that genius of the underground, Richard Corben, and even Mr. John Severin himself – whose wonderful *Mad* pages first wowed me in my formative years. Tim Bradstreet's beautiful covers made the book unmistakable. Readers responded favorably to the new direction; there was a certain sense that this was where the Punisher was always supposed to have gone. I still regard my five years on the book as some of the best and most rewarding work of my career – not bad going for a character once dismissed as unworthy of serious consideration, a distraction from matters weightier and more deserving.

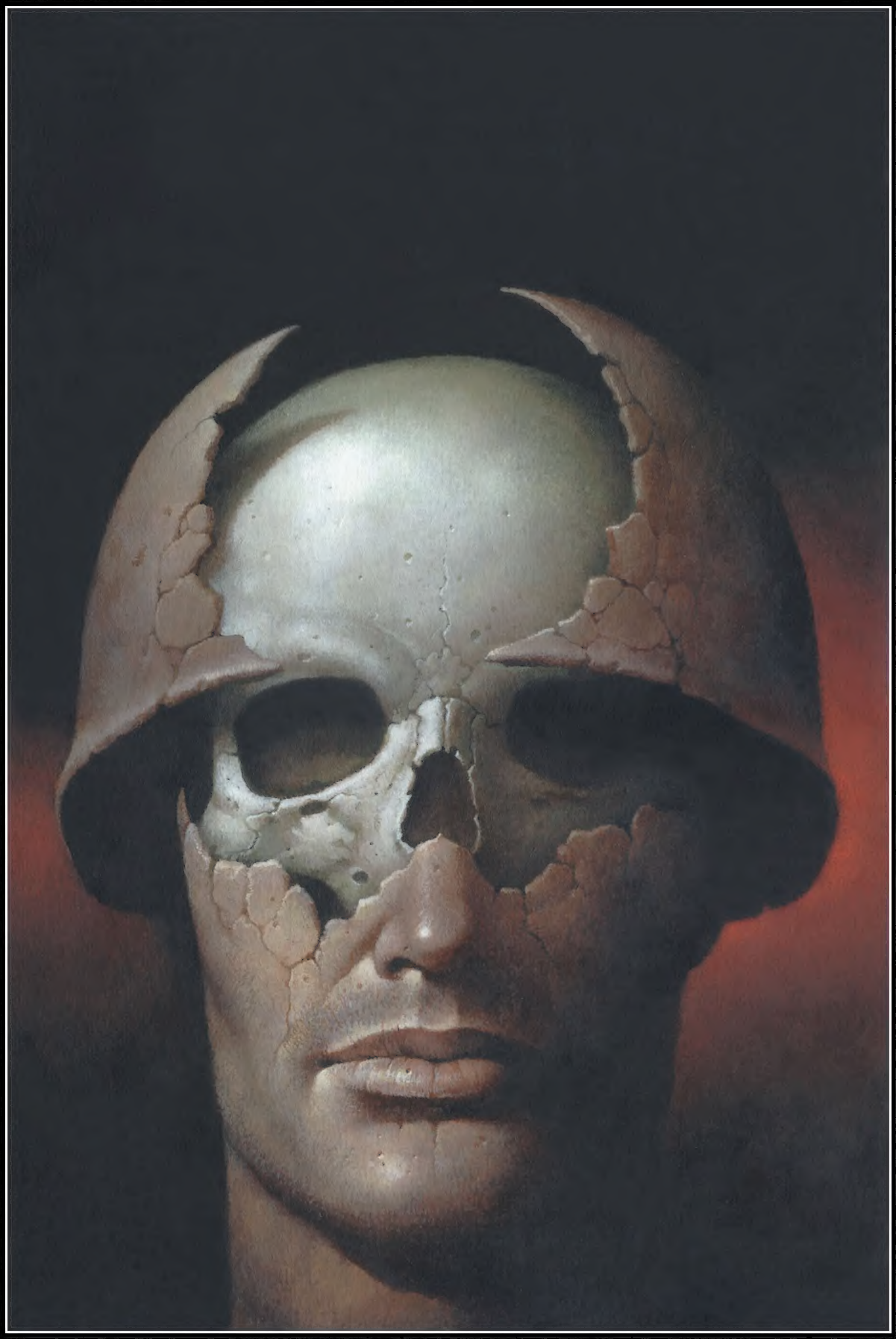
My last issue of the title (but not of Frank Castle's adventures, believe me) was #60, set to appear in the second volume of these new omnibus editions. It was the sixth part of a story called *Valley Forge, Valley Forge*, which brought things full circle for the book and which remains one of my all-time favorites. I've long since lost the script, but I still recall the panel description I wrote for page twenty-two of that issue, which inspired a magnificent full-figure shot from Mr. Parlov. In it Frank strides toward us through a room filled with dead men, .45 low at his side, the skull on his chest mere decoration beneath that unwavering gaze of inhuman certainty. The script ended with a simple three-word sentence: *He'll never change.*

Nor will he.

– Garth Ennis
New York City, January 2018

Garth Ennis *has been writing comics for over twenty-five years. Credits for Marvel include successful runs on* The Punisher *and* Fury, *as well as his revival of the classic* Phantom Eagle. *For other publishers he has created* Preacher, Hitman, The Boys, Crossed, Battlefields, War Stories, Rover Red Charlie, Caliban, A Train Called Love *and* Red Team. *Originally from Belfast, Northern Ireland, Ennis now lives in New York City with his wife, Ruth.*

BORN #1



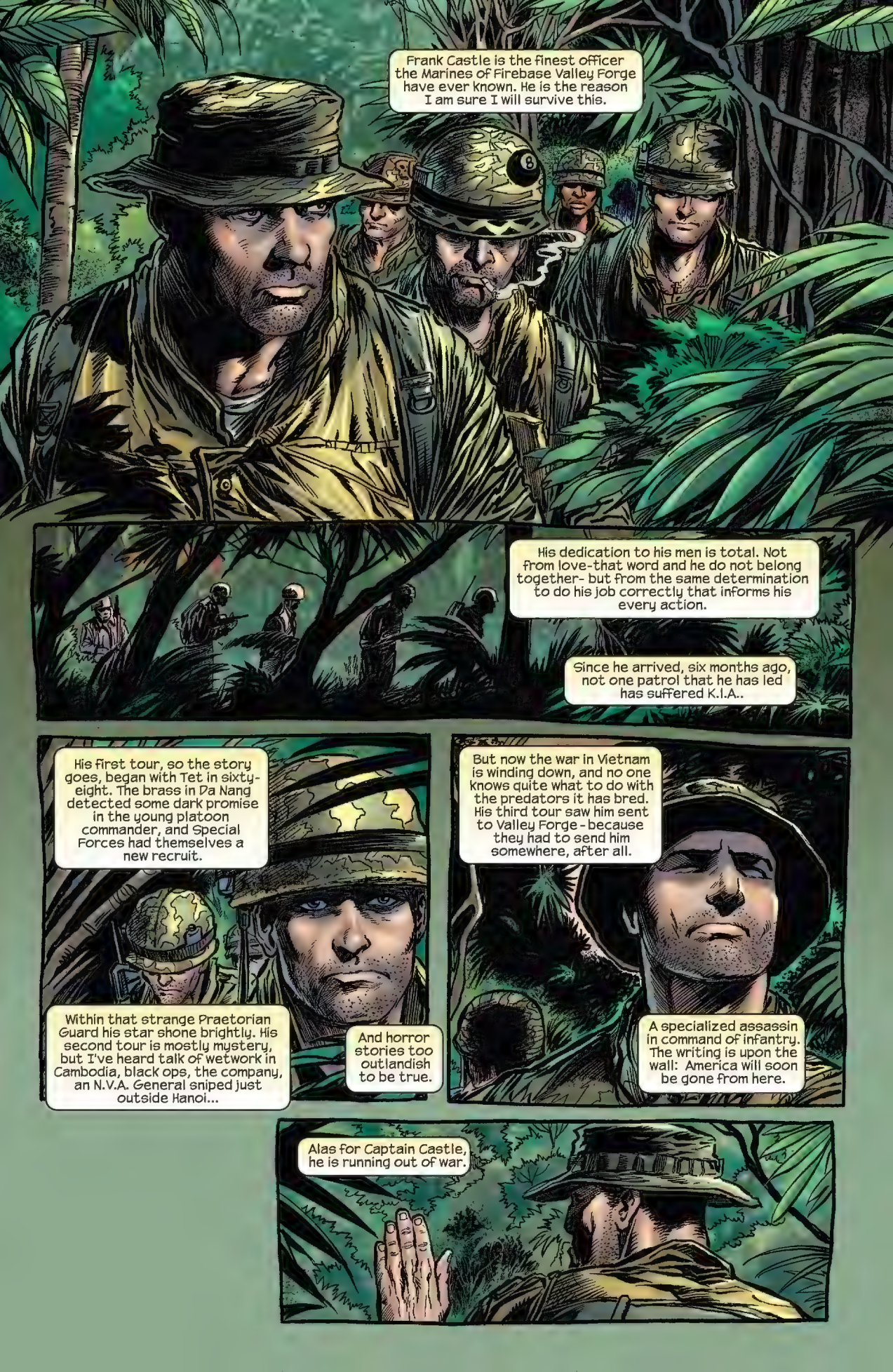
Firebase Valley Forge, seven miles from the Cambodian border
Late October 1971
THE FIRST DAY

5741

Told you.
Shit...
Pay up, motherfucker.
We gonna go after 'em?
No way he was gonna make it with that wing all fucked up like that.
Charlie'd be long gone by the time we got down there. Cap'n knows that.
An' we got bigger shit to fry.

I will not die in Vietnam.
SEND MY SS HOME!
My name is Stevie Goodwin and I am so short I can taste it.
I am down to thirty-nine days and a wake-up, and on that magic day I will step aboard the big freedom bird and leave this place behind forever.
On the great silver craft that carries me home I will sleep the sleep of the just, and beautiful roundeye angels in stewardesses' outfits will smile with joy and bring me cold, cold beer.
I will not die here. I will escape these fields of slaughter.
I will not re-up and serve a second tour, will not become a combat-junkie like so many of the others--forever jonesing for their next sweet firefight, their lethal speedball of adrenaline and tracer.

I will not fall in love with war like Captain Castle.


Frank Castle is the finest officer the Marines of Firebase Valley Forge have ever known. He is the reason I am sure I will survive this.
His dedication to his men is total. Not from love-that word and he do not belong together- but from the same determination to do his job correctly that informs his every action.
Since he arrived, six months ago, not one patrol that he has led has suffered K.I.A..
His first tour, so the story goes, began with Tet in sixty-eight. The brass in Da Nang detected some dark promise in the young platoon commander, and Special Forces had themselves a new recruit.
Within that strange Praetorian Guard his star shone brightly. His second tour is mostly mystery, but I've heard talk of wetwork in Cambodia, black ops, the company, an N.V.A. General sniped just outside Hanoi...
And horror stories too outlandish to be true.
But now the war in Vietnam is winding down, and no one knows quite what to do with the predators it has bred. His third tour saw him sent to Valley Forge - because they had to send him somewhere, after all.
A specialized assassin in command of infantry. The writing is upon the wall: America will soon be gone from here.
Alas for Captain Castle, he is running out of war.

BAD

BAD
Ah, you fuckin' cocktease--

HA!!
FRONT
TOWARD ENEMY

Fucker's buggin' out--
Tedrow!
Hey! Charlie!
Go deep!!

I will have sons.
When the big freedom bird takes me home I will make love to many, many beautiful women, and when I meet the most beautiful of all I will marry her that very day.
She will give me sons and they will grow up tall and strong as giants, and I will watch them grow, and sing with pride.
I will take them up into the woods and the mountains and show them the greatest country in the world: the Promised Land that is their birthright.
The good America. The real America.
US
And not this tragic misstep into darkness.
In years to come the boys will learn their father went to war, and gaze on him anew, eyes bright with fascination.
They will ask the old man what he did, and who he fought, and where he went, and what he saw there--
And I will never, ever tell them.

Captain Castle.
I suppose you want to make your report.
Twenty-one Vietcong K.I.A.. Nil on our side.
Recovered a hundred plus A.K.'s, six R.P.G.'s, four mortars--all chicom type fifty-threes, not the little popguns--and enough ammunition and grenades to supply a company-strength unit for a week. Booby-trapped half-a-dozen of the rifles and destroyed the rest.
And we're all going to die when, exactly?
This is the third supply run we've hit in two weeks. With our patrols as patchy as they are, we can't begin to guess how much is getting through.
V.C. carrying N.V.A. equipment means one thing: offensive. They're stockpiling for a push and when they do come it'll be straight through us. We're out here on our own, Colonel.
We should be getting ready.
General Padden will be here in an hour. Surprise inspection.
I want you to give him a tour of the base.

Me.
Mm.
I'll be sick by the time he gets here. Malaria again. I just won't be up to it.
I'm not up to any of this shit...
You going to pass my report on to Da Nang?
Just like all the others, Captain.
You've got an hour before Padden arrives. You should see about getting the place squared away.
Don't be so fucking stupid.
I know that look.

And Colonel Ottman is *sick*, is that right?
That's right, General.
Uh-huh.
Well, Castle, or whatever your name is, when he crawls out from under his rock you can tell him his command is a *disgrace.* In the short time I've been here I've seen bunkers left unmanned and sorely in need of repair, I've seen artillery pieces covered in filth and rust, I've seen *blatant* abuse of marijuana cigarettes--to say nothing of the reports we've been getting that paint this place as the heroin capital of I Corps--
And barely one in ten of the Marines I've seen here seems to know they're supposed to salute an officer! A *senior officer*, at that!
Now why the hell has nothing been done to rectify the situation? *Why is Firebase Valley Forge a complete and total fuck story?!*
The last man who tried to restore order here was Captain Garand. He woke up next to a Claymore mine.

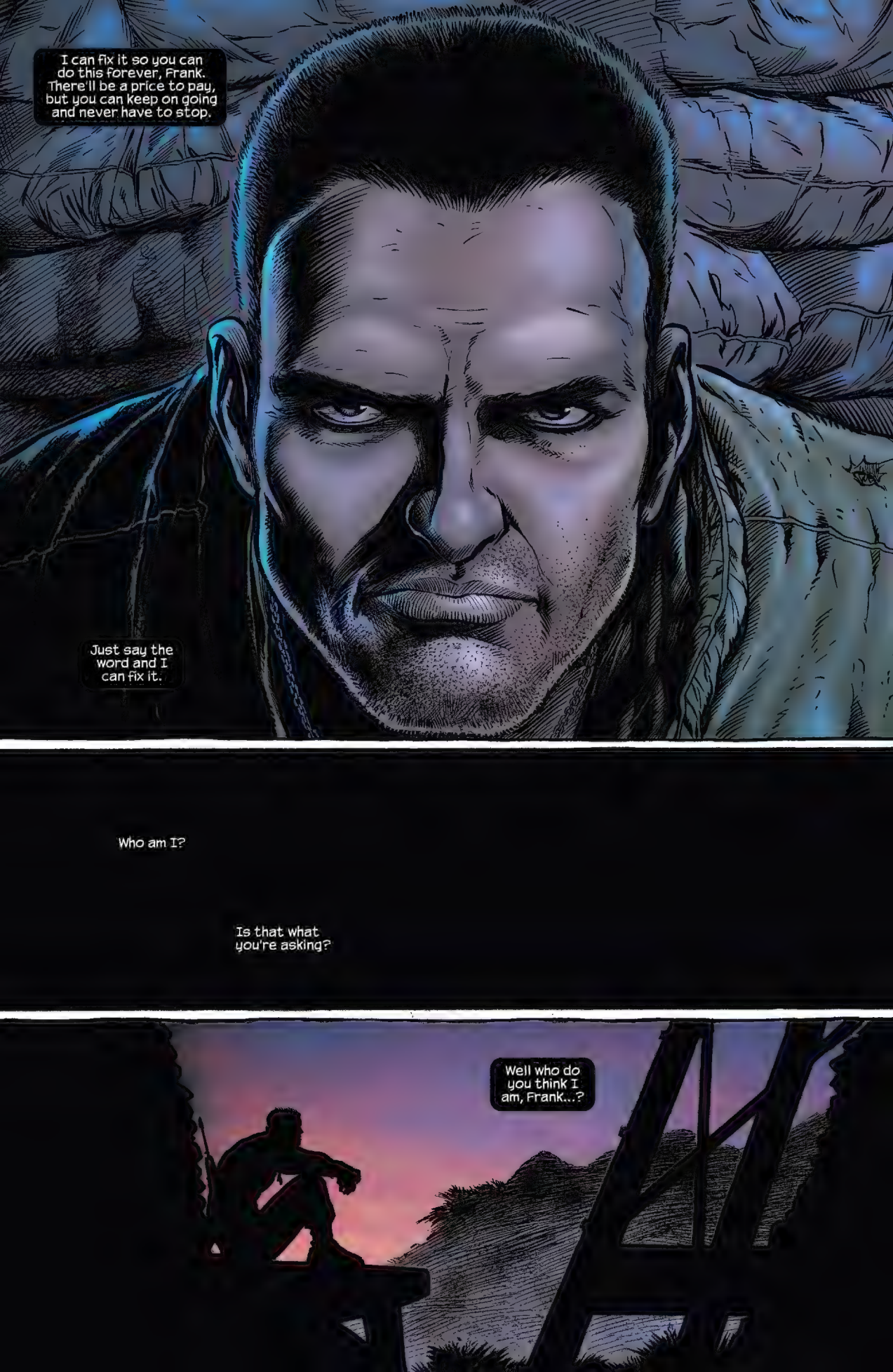
The fragging of officers is a myth, Captain. That's exactly the kind of bullshit the peace freaks use to give this war a bad name.
Now you answer my question and you make it goddamn good: What the hell is being done to restore order here?
Nothing.
Valley Forge is undermanned by fifty percent. Most of the replacements we do get sent are rejects and fuck-ups, the N.C.O.'s most of all. Maintaining discipline without good Sergeants is impossible.
We're short of equipment and munitions, and resupply is a bad joke. The Marines here know that; they figure if you people in the rear don't give a shit then why should they?
I've been able to put together about a platoon's worth of motivated individuals to maintain our offensive patrols. If we can't do that then there's no point in us being here in the first place.
We're the only U.S. outpost left watching Cambodia. Everyone else has been sent home.
Who's going to keep an eye on the enemy? Who's going to interdict his lines of supply? If he comes in strength, who's going to stop him cutting the country in half?
You're closing the base?
I'm glad you feel that way, Captain. Because once I make my report I very much doubt that this place will be here at all.
The purpose of my inspection was to answer that very question. And by God, yes, we are going to close this fucking base...

This is not a popular war, Captain. The communistic turds in the media have seen to that. Cuts have to be made: this is merely the latest.
Besides, what happens around here is soon going to be moot. This conflict and our involvement in it are all but at an end.
You let Charlie know that yet?
Charlie will no longer be your concern, once you and the rest of this rabble are shipped out of here. You are going home. If I have any say in the matter, you will be leaving the Marine Corps-
And then the closest you will get to the enemy will be watching him on the T.V. news.
Dismissed.
General, if you'll come with me I'll show you incontrovertible evidence that Firebase Valley Forge has to remain open.
For Christ's sake...!
Be advised you are on thin fucking ice with me, mister--
It'll be well worth your time, General.
Believe me.

This is it.
What is?
You can see it better from out at the end of the ridge.
See what?
If you go to the end of the ridge you'll see what I mean.
Hhhhh! Jesus!
Well? What is it? What the fuck am I supposed to be looking at out here?
DANGER
SNIPER AT WORK
DAWN TO DUSK
DANGER

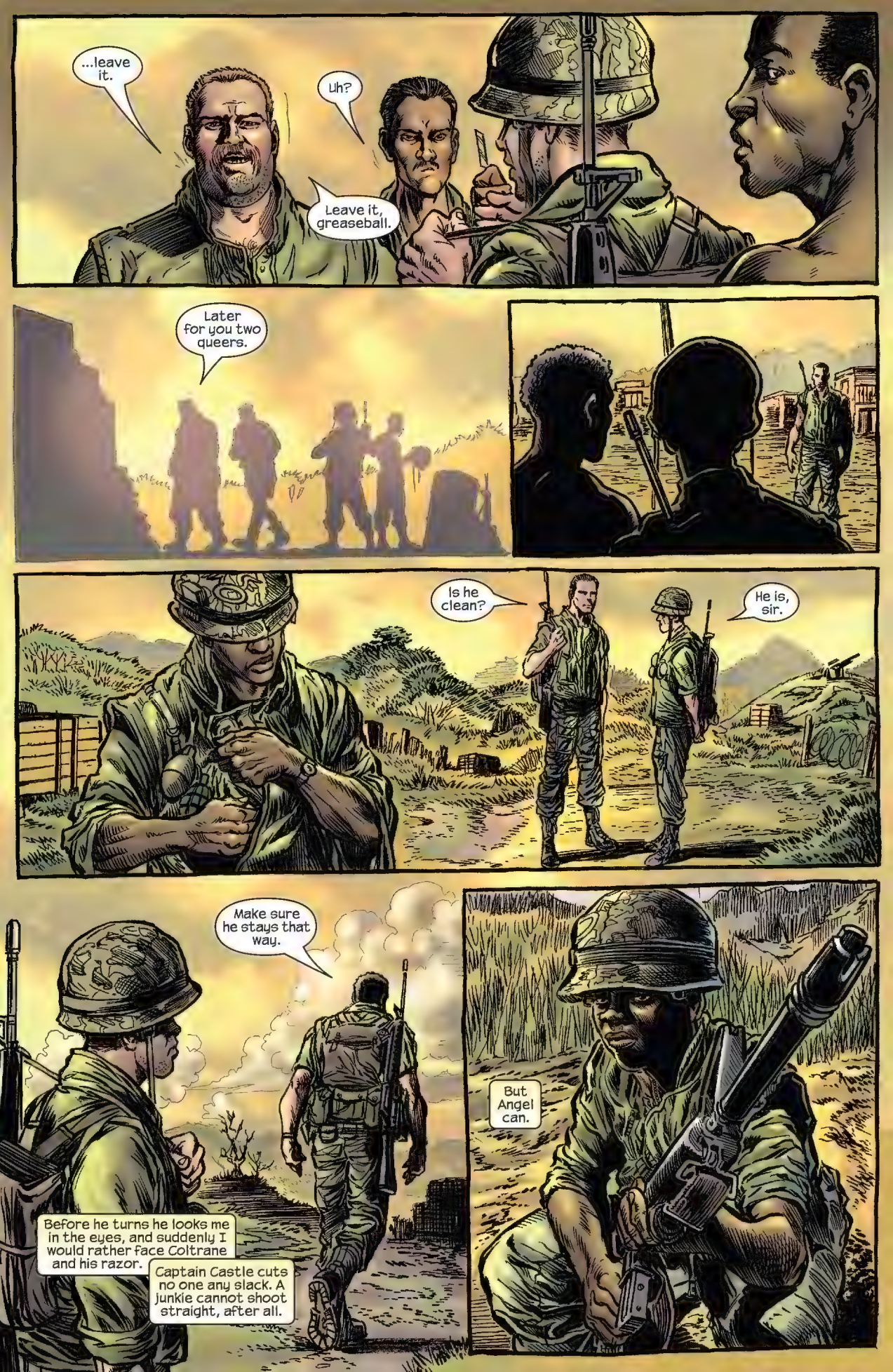
Fuckin' asshole-- hhnngh--!
'Choo lookin' at, Stevie?
Ohhh...
Couldn't even read a muthafuckin' sign.
Some General.
I wonder what he's thinking.
Same thing he always thinkin', sat up there.
"Tomorrow is another day...
"But not for some muthafucka."

Very clever, Frank.
You got your war a stay of execution.
US
But it won't last. You know that. The things the General said are true.
This wonderland of yours is coming to an end.
I know you love this.
Talk all you want about your duty, about stopping Charlie creeping in and killing half of I Corps in its sleep--we both of us know that isn't it.
When did you ever feel so alive?
So full of fierce black joy?


I can fix it so you can do this forever, Frank. There'll be a price to pay, but you can keep on going and never have to stop.
Just say the word and I can fix it.
Who am I?
Is that what you're asking?
Well who do you think I am, Frank...?

Angel?
Shit.
THE SECOND DAY

Captain Castle's taking the platoon out.
But--
Come on, you don't want to do this. Not now.
Fuck...
That sun is some harsh shit.
Goodwin.
Who's gonna pay for this jungle bunny's fix?
We had a deal, Coltrane. You weren't going to let him into your bunker.
Remember?
Ain't gonna do it.
Garcia, hold this motherfucker.


...leave it.
Uh?
Leave it, greaseball.
Later for you two queers.
Is he clean?
He is, sir.
Make sure he stays that way.
But Angel can.
Before he turns he looks me in the eyes, and suddenly I would rather face Coltrane and his razor.
Captain Castle cuts no one any slack. A junkie cannot shoot straight, after all.

The platoon moves out through a gap in the wire.
The platoon.
Not first platoon, or third, or even Captain Castle's-- but simply *the platoon*. Because we are the last twenty-nine marines at Firebase Valley Forge who care enough about the enemy to go and find him.
The other hundred plus will fight him if he comes--
Or run and hide--
Or o.d. just before the bayonets go in.
But we are hunting Charlie. And each man has his reason.
BAD
Tedrow likes to throw grenades at people.
McDonald has a bag of scalps.
The Captain is in love with combat.
And I am here for Angel.

Angel, who killed the three V.C. who caught me changing magazines.
I could get out of this, of course. Sit out my thirty-eight and a wake-up with the others on the base.
No one would stop me. No one cares.
Instead I stay with the platoon.
Some of us are here for our brothers, some of us for our horror stories. Some of us even still believe in duty.
Americans through the looking-glass, lost in Vietnam.

Humping the boonies.
Hours go by.
Captain Castle believes the Vietcong are laying the groundwork for an N.V.A. offensive. For the first time in a long time, the whole platoon is out.
If we run into Charlie, or his North Vietnamese Army comrades, maybe strength in numbers will prevail.
Maybe.
Tedrow!
Sniper!
Corpsman up!!!
Face outboard and return fire! NOW!
CORPSMAN!

Fuck!
There's more'n one, there's--
Watch behind--
Jesus Christ, there's three!
BAD
Four!
I can't see a goddamned thing--
We are being *fucked*--
AAAAHHH!!
BAD
Give me the 'sixty.

The black pig-iron in his hands falls silent.
Try as it might, the world cannot exhale.
This war has bred a saying, oft-repeated: "Payback is a motherfucker."
At Valley Forge we have another.
"If you think *payback's* bad--"

"You haven't met Frank Castle."

Our second corpsman checks our casualties--a formality, all six are K.I.A.--and only then is he allowed to dress the Captain's wound.
The rest of us spread out by fireteams to confirm the kills.
There.
McDonald is infuriated.
I think he pissed his pants in the attack.
Come on! We got one! Come on!
No--
CUNT!!

What's goin' on?
McDonald catch hisself a gook?
What--

Holy shit.

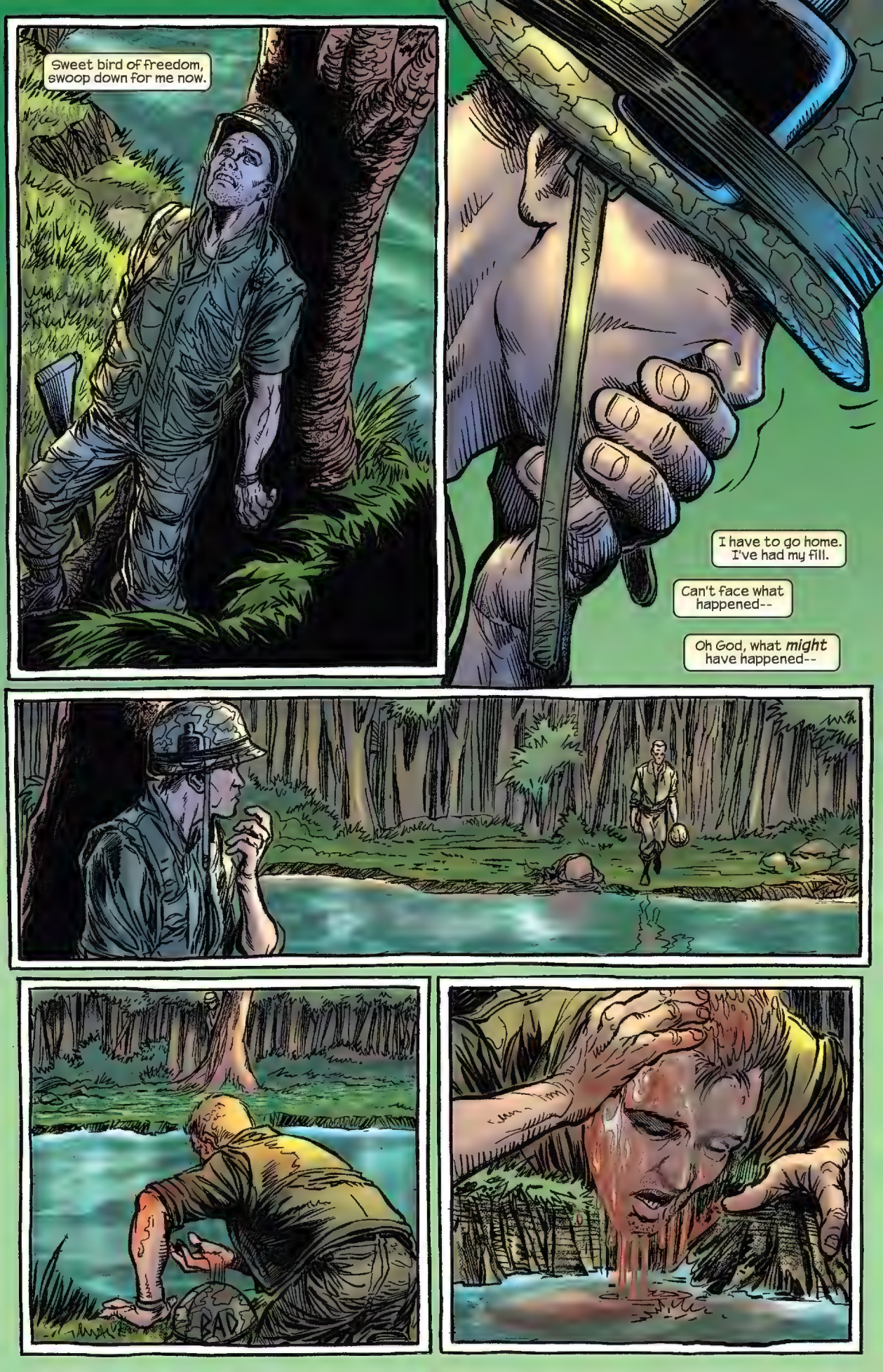
'Fuck we gonna do wit' her...?

Well, I tell you.
Want some?

Get some.

It is not now.
I am not here.
It is nineteen sixty-three and I am in the sixth grade. Mark Bannerman is fighting Bobby Clark.
It is not child versus child; Mark has grown bigger sooner and is handing out the kind of damage that a man can do a boy.
Some of us like seeing Bobby Clark get hurt. Some of us are mesmerized. Some don't know what to do.
Some of us are scared of Mark, or of the crowd, or just of acting on our own.
And Bobby's face shatters and no one does a thing.
Wait your fuckin' turn, you--

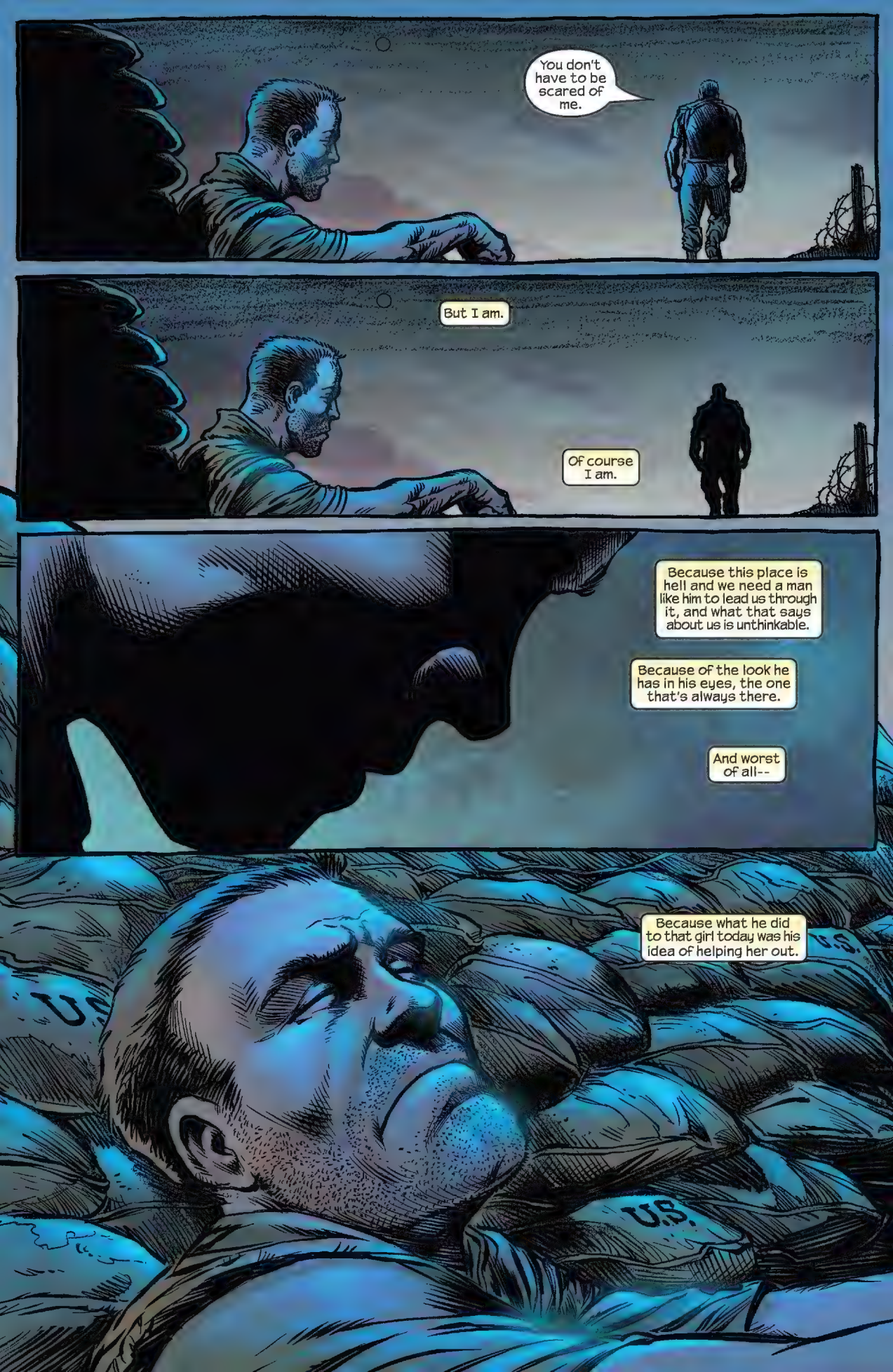
No rape.
We're here to kill the enemy.
That's all.


Sweet bird of freedom, swoop down for me now.
I have to go home. I've had my fill.
Can't face what happened--
Oh God, what *might* have happened--
BAD

Valley Forge's aging Hueys fetch us home.
Try as we might, we couldn't find McDonald.
We searched. We waited. Captain Castle held the slicks as long as possible.
I didn't say a word to anyone.
Stevie.
The shit wit' the gook, don't let it fuck you up. You think too much, man. Always have.
This place got zero slack to give.

U.S.
What made you keep quiet?
You-- You saw me?
When I was walking away.
I was... scared, sir. That was all.
What made you do it...?

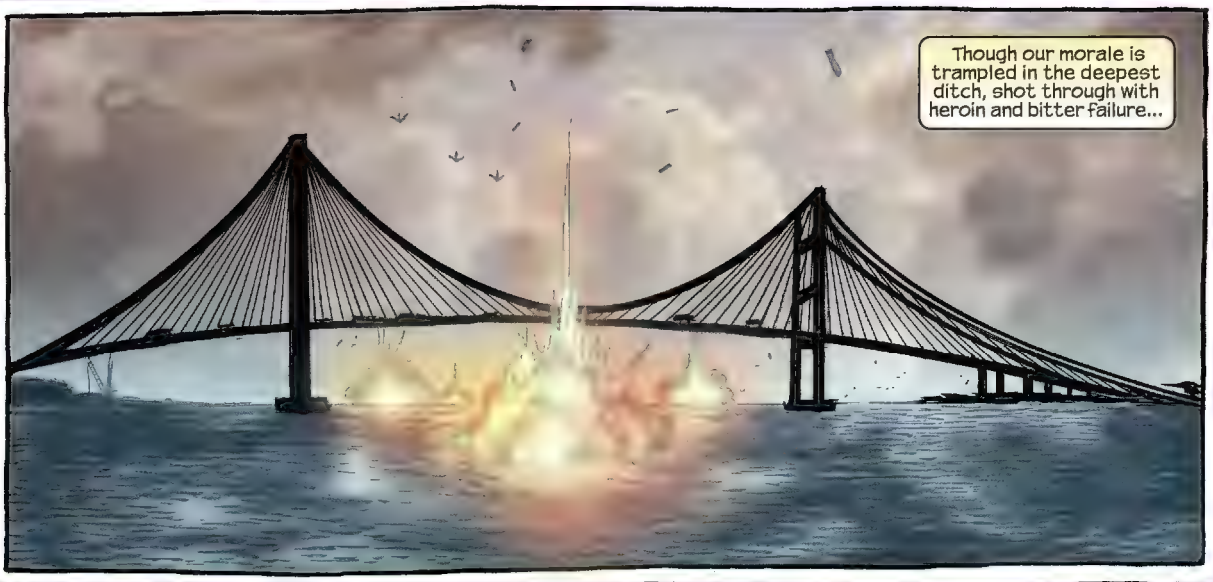
I wanted to punish him.
What about the girl?
Don't be stupid.
I put a V.C. sniper on a medevac and not a man in the platoon ever trusts me in combat again.
I hand her over to Intel and she doesn't tell them shit. The Arvin interpreters take turns with her, then they shoot her in the head.
Goodwin.


You don't have to be scared of me.
But I am.
Of course I am.
Because this place is hell and we need a man like him to lead us through it, and what that says about us is unthinkable.
Because of the look he has in his eyes, the one that's always there.
And worst of all--
Because what he did to that girl today was his idea of helping her out.
U.S.
U.S.

BORN #3

We cannot lose in Vietnam.
Try as we might.
THE THIRD DAY

Though our Generals are so stupid, our strategy so poor, as to all but guarantee defeat...


Though our morale is trampled in the deepest ditch, shot through with heroin and bitter failure...

Though we face the toughest, bravest fighters in the world, strange little men with hearts like those of tigers...

Though we make the world despise us...
Though we do things that will stain our souls forever...
Though America eats its own intestines over this, cities riven with unrest, leaders inspiring loathing and distrust...
We cannot lose.

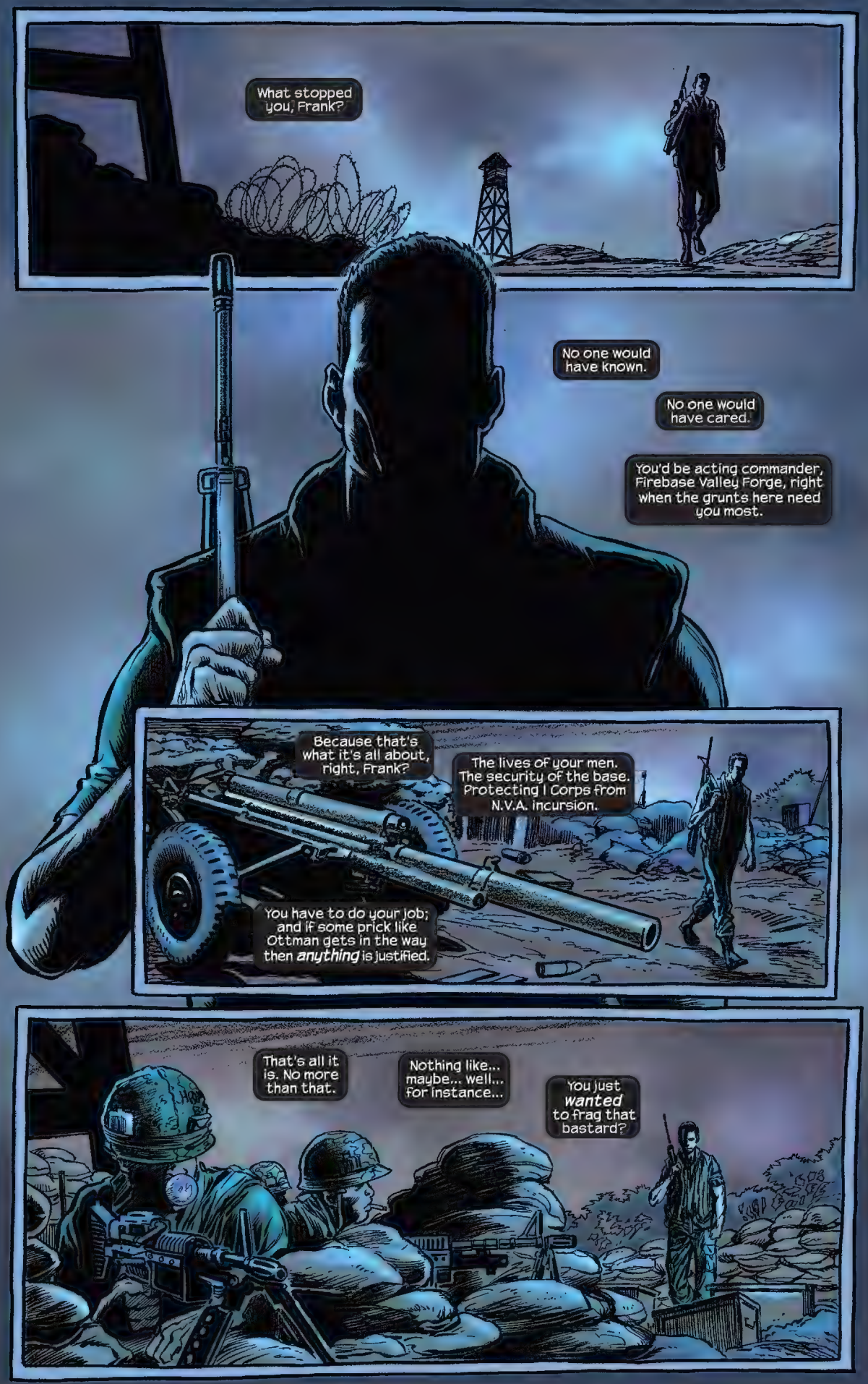
Because when we are gone-- when the brave little fighters kick us out, and we finally lose all stomach for this wretched, knotted puzzle of a war--
No one-- *no one*-- in South-East Asia, or anywhere on Earth, will look at what is left of Vietnam--
And think it smart to fuck with the United States.

Why can't we stay out of the rest of the world?
Uh?
We have everything we could ever possibly want. Why can't we stay out of the rest of the world?
I mean look at the mess we--
Fast movers.
U.S

Muthafucka.
What I'd give to git that fuckin' high.

Going home on the deck. You know what that means?
I know you're going to tell me.
They're staying under the weather, not trying to climb through it. This is going to be a big storm.
Once it hits we'll have no air support.
There's our own. We're out of range of everyone else's.
We've got six one-oh-fives that the crews are too stoned to maintain. What ammunition there is looks like it'll cook off in the breech. We haven't had resupply in--
I haven't requested resupply. Or anything else, for that matter.
There's still artillery, Captain.
Look, you're the only one that hasn't noticed, so I'll spell it out for you: no one cares about this place. The enemy least of all.
Everyone knows the war is almost over.
We get to go home soon. So long as we don't do anything stupid or raise any eyebrows back in Da Nang, we can climb on a plane and get the hell out of this shithole.
All we have to do... is shut the fuck up.

This could be a bad time not to rock the boat, Ottman.
Mm?
Weather like this is perfect for the enemy. I've told you the kind of activity we've been seeing lately.
Colonel Ottman. For what it's worth.
If there's nothing else, could you go away and leave me alone now?
What about the base?
What about it?
You're supposed to be in charge here. You're responsible for the lives of these men.
I'm going to take a shit.


What stopped you, Frank?
No one would have known.
No one would have cared.
You'd be acting commander, Firebase Valley Forge, right when the grunts here need you most.
Because that's what it's all about, right, Frank?
The lives of your men. The security of the base. Protecting I Corps from N.V.A. incursion.
You have to do your job; and if some prick like Ottman gets in the way then *anything* is justified.
That's all it is. No more than that.
Nothing like... maybe... well... for instance...
You just *wanted* to frag that bastard?

Making you wonder, is it, Frank?
The way you kill at the drop of a hat?
General Padden. McDonald only yesterday. Very nearly Ottman, too. And every one of them deserved it.
That what's got you worried?
That urge you have, to give every motherfucker in the world exactly what they deserve?
FRONT
TOWARD ENEMY
Because you can, Frank. You can. I keep telling you, I can fix it for you if you'll only say the word.
You can kill every single one of them.
That's the gift I'll give you.
It can be yours.

Goodwin.
Uh... sir?
Easing the springs?
Yeah... yes, sir. Just, you know, don't want the magazines freezing up at the wrong moment.
Not enough of the grunts here do that.
Not enough of the grunts here want to go home, Captain.
That's what I sometimes think.
You must be pretty short by now.
Thirty-seven and a wake-up, sir.
You know I have a family, Goodwin?

You... no, Sir...
No one really knows anything about you...
My daughter's four. There's another on the way; my wife found out she was pregnant a week after I began my third tour.
Hoping for a boy this time.
Well that's... that's great, Captain. I mean it really gives you something to look forward to, to stay alive for...
I sometimes think they might be my last chance.
You should reload those magazines. We took K.I.A. for the first time yesterday. With this rain the way it is, we're completely cut off.
If our luck's gone bad, we ought to be squared away.

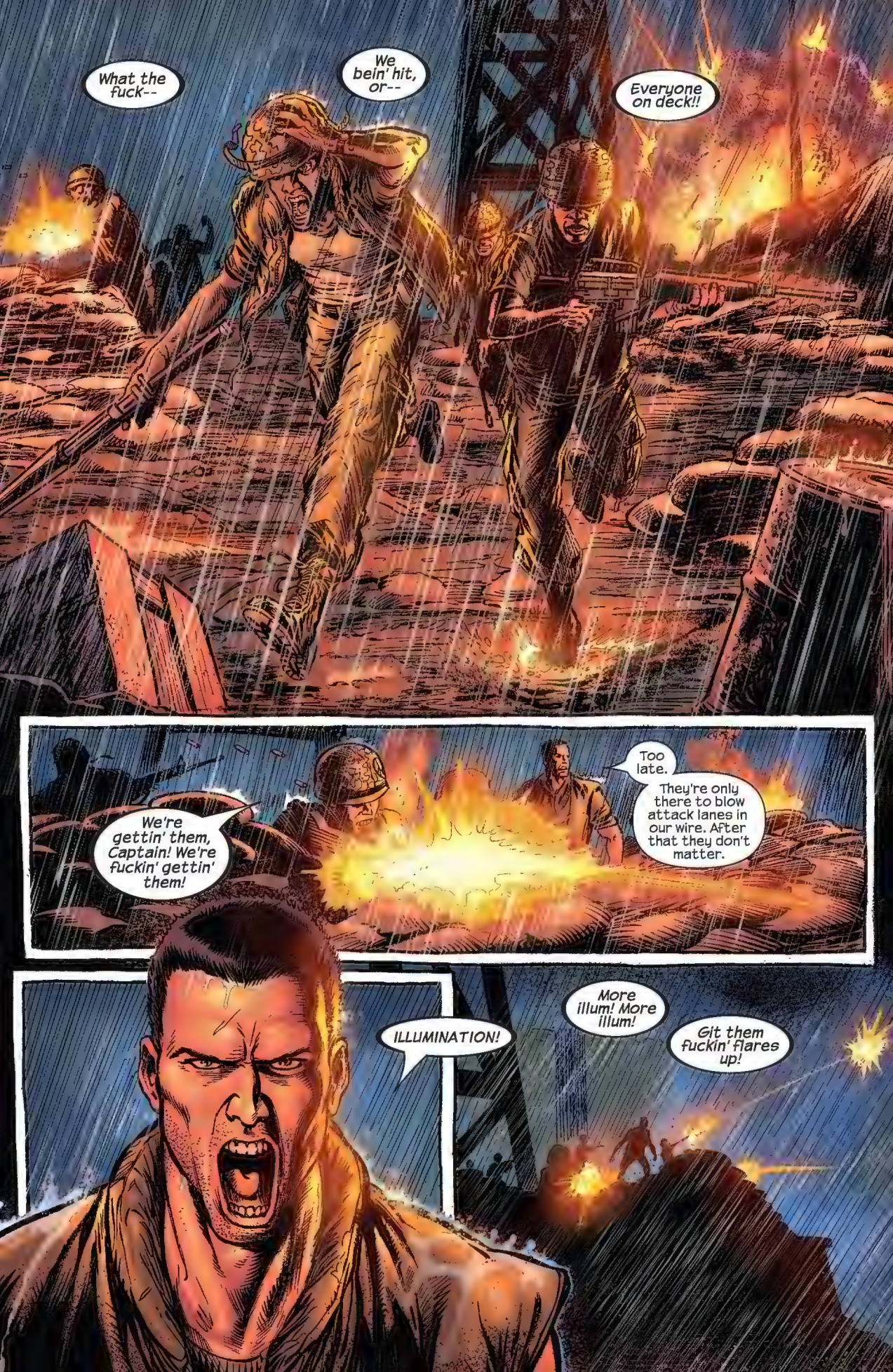
Uh... right...
That looks like your friend down there. Headed for Coltrane's bunker.
Oh, Jesus Christ...!
Need a hand?
Negative, sir.
I'll handle this on my own.
What the hell was *that* supposed to be, Frank...?
Talking happy-ever-after with the softest heart in the platoon. Trying to pretend you're just an ordinary Joe. Spare me, will you?
And that *last chance* shit--to deny what you really are, is that what you mean?
I'm your last chance, Frank.
To *be* what you *want to be.*

Coltrane.
Uh...?
Let's go, Angel.
No.
Fuck off, Garcia.
No.
Let's take a walk in the rain.
No.

Dawn in an hour.
I thought you were going to stay off that--
Oh, fuck you, Stevie...
Angel, you're getting short now. You're down to two and days.You can't tell me the big plan is to survive Vietnam only to take a smack habit home with you.
You've got far, far too much to live for...
How the fuck you know that?
You got too much to live for. You got college an' a job an' the muthafuckin' girl nex' door ready to spread her pussy for you. You gonna live like Ozzie an' Harriet.
All I got waitin' for me's a ghetto fulla death.

We shouldn't be here.
No, we fuckin' shouldn't.
I mean all of us. Americans. We shouldn't have gotten involved here; all we're doing is making an even bigger mess of the place than it was already.
And we're screwing up our own country. We've been tearing ourselves apart over this for the last five years.
This has nothing to do with the real America...
Oh, fuck.
Stevie, you are so fulla shit. I keep hearin' you talkin' 'bout this idea you got--this real America?
It's a fuckin' dream, man. It belongs in the thirties. The twenties. Fuck, the Wild muthafuckin' West.
That's the real America right there: back when you was shootin' each other, rapin' red Indians an' callin' me nigga...
U.S.

That isn't true...!
Grow the fuck up.
An' don't be givin' me none o' that shit 'bout how there's good along wit' the bad. How all everybody gotta do is work hard an' they gonna make it.
There's good for you an' there's bad for me, Stevie. Ain't no more to it than that.
But--
Fuck but--
SAPPERS IN THE WIRE!


What the fuck--
We bein' hit, or--
Everyone on deck!!
We're gettin' them, Captain! We're fuckin' gettin' them!
Too late.
They're only there to blow attack lanes in our wire. After that they don't matter.
ILLUMINATION!
More illum! More illum!
Git them fuckin' flares up!

FEAR NO EVIL
Give me the 'sixty.

There is a Great Beast loose in the world of men.
It awoke in dark times, to fight a terrible enemy. It stormed through Europe, across the far Pacific, and crushed the evil that it found there underfoot.
But when it was victorious, when the crooked cross and the rising sun were done with, the Great Beast's keepers found that it would not go back to sleep.
The Beast has many heads, and on its heads are written names: Lockheed. Bell. Monsanto. Dow. Grumman. Colt. And many more.
And they are very, very hungry.
So the Great Beast must be fed: and every generation, our country goes to war to do just that.
A war for war's sake, usually. And one that could have been avoided. But there must be blood, in extraordinary quantities, and whether it is foreign or American is of no consequence at all.
And so, today, at Firebase Valley Forge, our turn has finally arrived.

THE LAST DAY

Today is the day we feed the Beast.

Captain Castle! Captain Castle!
Sir, we still can't raise Da Nang, the storm's playing hell with reception--
Keep trying.
But we got a call-back from an armored unit east of here! We lost 'em, but Penn thinks we can get 'em back and relay a message!
Tell them we've been taking frontals all night and are standing by to be overrun. We need air and arty immediate, anything they can give us.
Sir--
Colonel Ottman says we can't use the radio-- he--
He keeps saying don't rock the boat, over and over--
Shoot him.

Fuckin' air gonna be souped in anyhow! Ain't no muthafucka flyin' in this shit!
Oh hell--
They're in, Captain! The whole left flank is folding!
So are we.
Tell the cannon cockers to fire on this position. Expend all hotel echo, then depress to maximum and load flechette.

Fall back on the command post! Pass the word!
C'mon, you cocksuckin' piece a' shit--
Angel!!
You rice-propelled muthafuckas! Get some! Get some!!
Angel, for God's sake!
There ain't no God, fool! Look around you!
There ain't no muthafuckin' God!!

FIRE--
FIRE--
FIRE--

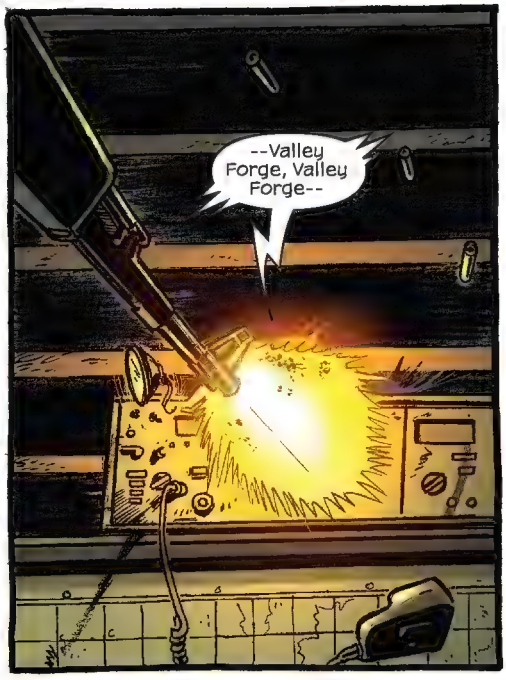
Oh God
Oh dear Lord God
Goodwin.
Where's yore nigger, boy?
AAAAAH!
Where's yore queer fuckin' nigger gone, huh?
Let's go, Marine.

What about the command post?
Overrun before I got there.
The gunners?
Bayonetted.
There go the junkies.

Oh, Jesus...!

Are-- are we the last?
I can still hear firing up at the airstrip.

--Valley Forge, this is Tusker leader-- Repeat your message, over--


--Valley Forge, Valley Forge--

I was so certain I would make it.
The big freedom bird.
Thirty-six and a wake-up.
I am out of here.
In the end I can do no more than follow on a killer's heels, rushing with him to his Alamo.

Goodwin!
Pop smoke! They'll hit us too! Pop smoke!!

Stevie!
Stevie!
Stevie!
Stevie!
You made it, you silly son of a bitch.

Time to shit or get off the pot, Frank.
You've been hit three times now. Four.
You'll burn out the barrel on that thing any second.
I can help you, but you have to say the word...
You know you want to.
Three tours in 'Nam, Frank. Seeking without realizing. Into the nightmare again and again.
What was it kept you coming back?
What else would you be looking for but *this*?

I can give it to you, Frank--
There'll be a price, but nothing's free--
Say no, and you're one more K.I.A. on a hill that no one cared about to start with.
Say yes--
And I'll give you what you've wanted all these years.
But you have to say it--
Say it--
Say it--
A war that lasts forever, a war that never ends, but you have to say the word, Frank--
YES.

Sarge?
God, they're gone, they're all just gone...
Everything burned up in the nape...
There's *nobody...!*
Sarge?
Get the Lieutenant.
Hello? Hey? Buddy?
Are you--?
Fuck.

Ell Tee, This is fucked--
Just get him on a dustoff, Sergeant.
But look at him! I mean what the fuck went down here, for Christ's sake? What *happened*?
Sergeant, I don't know and I don't want to know. Let's just get him on the slick, then he's not our problem anymore and we can finish up and get the fuck out of here...
But Ell Tee--
Give me that radio.

CAUTION
TRANS CARE
Frank.

Are you sure you don't need any help...?
I'm fine.
And you won't be going back?
No.
I went as far as I ever want to go, this time. I still don't... really remember...
But I'm never going away again. I'd be stupid to, so long as I've got you guys.
It took me far too long to realize that.
Frank?
We haven't talked in a while, Frank. You've been so busy.
Early discharge, a medal or two... lot of shut-the-fuck-up for a man who doesn't even care...
But Valley Forge was so far beyond the normal run of cluster-fucks they don't want anybody talking. And the looks on all those faces when you stepped off that Huey... well.
Anyway. Down to business.
You said yes to my offer, Frank. And I delivered. Not every day you beat two dozen men to death and soak up seven bullets, is it?
And... well... how can I put this...

You remember I mentioned there'd be a price...?

And who am I?
Let's just say we're in the same line of work, Frank. And I've been at it for a lot, lot longer than you.
Let's just say we'll be good friends, although you'll never hear from me again, and you'll keep me busy doing what I like to do...
Too late, Frank. Nothing you can do about it. Things have already been set in motion.
Besides, in a moment or two you'll have forgotten this little talk of ours entirely.
Just enjoy what you've got for the short time you'll have it.
And let's just leave it at that.
...right, Frank? We kind of lost you for a second there...
It's okay.
It's nothing, honey.
Hold on tight.
The End

PUNISHER #1

MARIA ELIZABETH
CASTLE
1948-1976
LISA CASTLE
1967-1976
FRANK DAVID
CASTLE
1971-1976
IN THE BEGINNING
PART ONE

THEY HATED THAT OLD MAN
SO MUCH THEY SHOT HIM
THROUGH MY FAMILY.

THE WORLD WENT CRAZY ON A SUMMER'S DAY IN CENTRAL PARK, IN THE TIME BEFORE UZIS AND BERETTAS, BEFORE NINE MILLIMETER POPGUNS RULED THE STREETS.

IT WAS A THOMPSON, LIKE THE ONES OUR FATHERS CARRIED, AND I RECOGNIZED ITS RATTLE EVEN AS ITS BIG, MAN-STOPPING FORTY-FIVES PUNCHED BLOOD AND BREATH FROM MY LUNGS.

I HIT THE GROUND BESIDE MY DAUGHTER. SHE'D BEEN GUTSHOT, BADLY, AND WHEN SHE SAW THE THINGS THAT BOILED AND WRIGGLED FROM HER BELLY, THE EXPRESSION ON HER FACE WAS NOT A LITTLE GIRL'S.

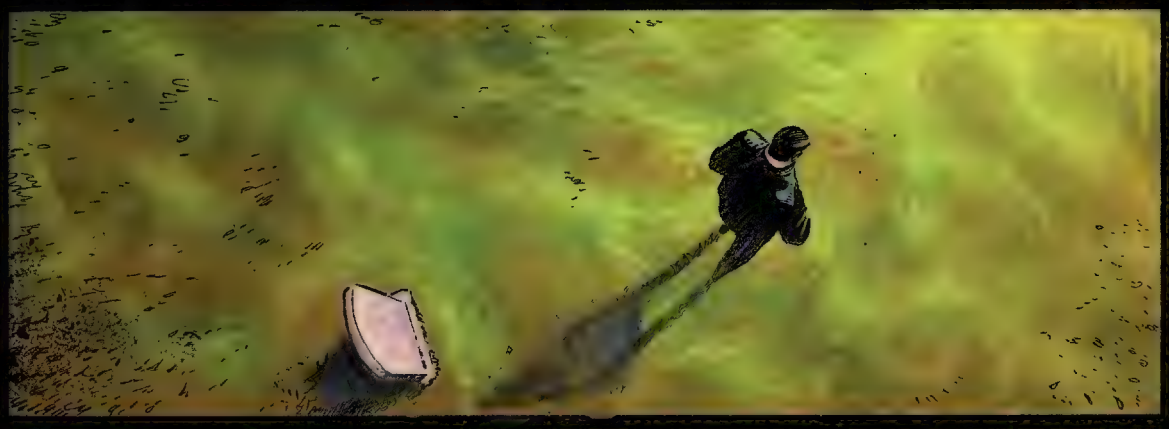
MY WIFE BLED OUT LATER ON THE OPERATING TABLE, HER HEART A GAPING HOLE HER LIFE DRAINED THROUGH. WHENEVER I GET CARELESS, THAT YEARNING IN HER EYES CREEPS UP AND BRINGS ME TO MY KNEES.

RIGHT THEN THE OLD MAN'S SOLDIERS STARTED SHOOTING BACK. MY SON DROPPED WORDLESSLY, WITHOUT A MARK ON HIM.

I TOOK A BREATH THAT CUT LIKE GLASS, SPAT BLOOD, ROSE TO MY KNEES, PICKED UP THE BOY AND SEARCHED IN VAIN FOR ENTRY WOUNDS.

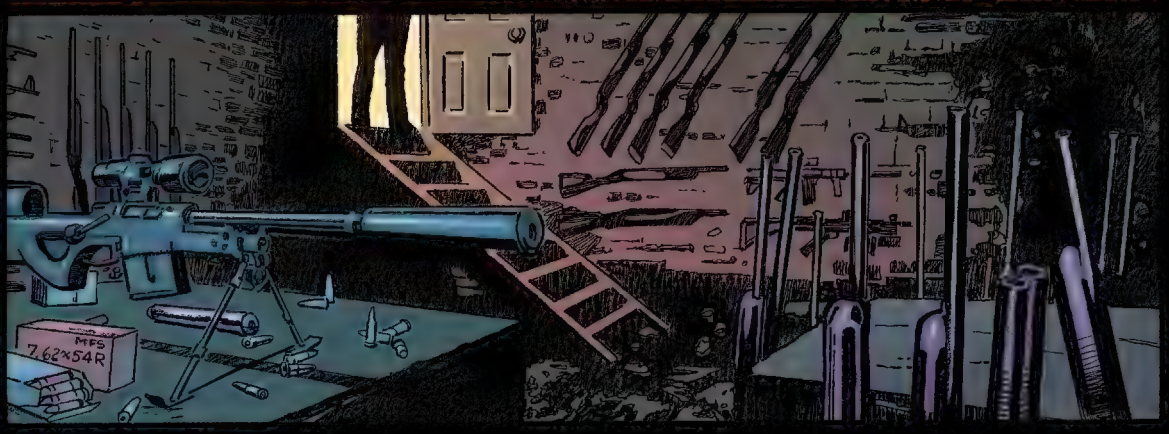
THE BULLET HAD ENTERED THROUGH HIS OPEN MOUTH.

THAT WAS OUR PICNIC IN THE PARK.



AND NOW

EVERY NIGHT



I GO OUT AND MAKE THE WORLD SANE.

THAT'S AN M60.
HE JUST PUT AN M60 IN THE BACK OF THAT SUBARU.
OH, THAT'S GREAT, HOW THE HELL ARE WE SUPPOSED TO TAKE HIM DOWN NOW?
WE AREN'T SUPPOSED TO DO ANYTHING, ROTH.
HE LIVES UP TO HIS LEGEND, I'LL SAY THAT FOR HIM.
WE SHOULDA DONE IT THIS MORNING WHEN WE HAD THE CHANCE, WE SHOULDA DONE IT AT THE CEMETERY...
FAT BOY SAID NO.
YOU KNOW, HE IS IN GREAT SHAPE FOR A GUY HIS AGE. I WONDER IF HE'S GOT A BIG DICK?
HA! O'BRIEN, WHY--
IN CASE I GET A CHANCE TO FUCK HIM. I LIKE BIG DICKS.
OH.
OKAY, THEY'VE GOT A FIX ON HIM. LET'S GO BACK AND WATCH THE REST ON WIDESCREEN.
RIGHT...

DON MASSIMO CESARE TURNED A HUNDRED TODAY.
DON IN TITLE ONLY. THESE DAYS ALL HE DOES IS WET HIMSELF AND WAIT FOR DEATH.
STILL, THEY'VE TURNED IT INTO AN EVENT. EVERY FAMILY IN THE COUNTRY SENDING SOMEONE DOWN TO WISH HIM HAPPY BIRTHDAY.
ALL THOSE WISEGUYS,
ALL IN ONE PLACE.
THE OLD MAN FROM THE PARK IS LONG SINCE DEAD; SO ARE HIS SOLDIERS, SO'S THE SHOOTER.
SO ARE THE PEOPLE WHO CALLED IN THE HIT, AND HUNDREDS, MAYBE THOUSANDS MORE.
BUT THE WAR GOES ON.

NO GUARDS TONIGHT. EVERYBODY'S AT THE PARTY.
TEN MINUTES PREP-WORK AND I'M READY TO GO MYSELF.
...TO DON MASSIMO!
SALUT.
SALUT.
SALUT.
SALUT.
SALUT.
SALUT.
SALUT.
MASSIMO CESARE, I'M HERE TO KILL YOU.

NOW
JUST
NO!!
MOTHERFUCKER!!

COUPLE OF SECONDS OF SHOCK.
OH GOD--
POPPA!
DON'T LOOK, BABY! COVER YOUR EYES!
COUPLE OF SECONDS TO GET PISSED.
GET THE MOTHERFLICKER--
COME ON, GODDAMMIT--
STAY HERE! STAY WITH THE KIDS! DO NOT GO OUT THERE!
LITTLE BIT LONGER TO GET EVERYONE OUT THE DOOR.
THAT'S ALL I'M GOING TO NEED.

FUCKIN' COCKSUCKER--
MURDERIN' PIECE A' SHIT--
YOU FUCKIN' KILLED A HUNDRED-YEAR-OLD MAN!!

IT'S OMAHA BEACH.

WOUNDED KNEE.

RORKE'S DRIFT, THE KILLING FIELDS, THE FIRST DAY ON THE SOMME.

WORLD WAR THREE IN NORTH JERSEY.

AND ONLY NOW, POURING ALITOMATIC FIRE INTO A HUMAN WALL--

DO I FEEL SOMETHING LIKE PEACE.

DON'T GO OUT THERE!
HE-- HE'S KILLING THEM--!
HE'S KILLING THEM!!
SOMEONE'S BEEN WATCHING WAR MOVIES.
GETS THE BRIGHT IDEA TO TRY AND FLANK ME.
INNA WATER!

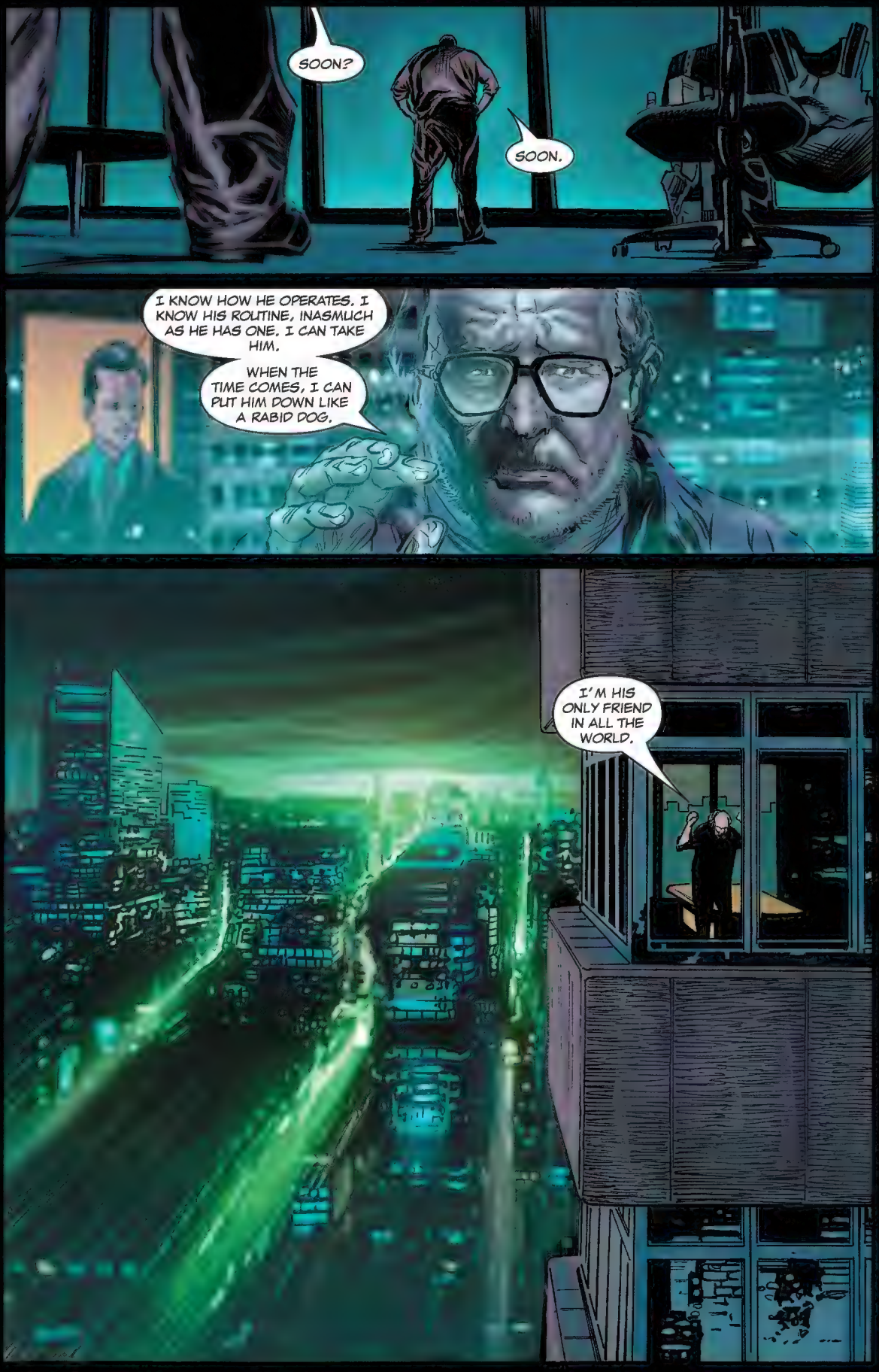
WRONG AGAIN.
FEW OF THEM MAKE IT TO COVER.
NOT A PROBLEM.
MOST WISEGUYS ARE ONE PART STREET-SMARTS TO TWO PARTS MUSCLE. ENOUGH TO TERRIFY THE MOOKS THAT OWE THEM MONEY. NOT MUCH MORE.
OUT OF THEIR ELEMENT THEY'RE CHILDREN.
LITTLE CHILDREN, GROPING IN THE DARK.
FRONT TOWARDS ENEMY

EEEEAAAAARRRRGGGHHH!!!
FRESH BELT.
TO FINISH OFF THE WOUNDED.
TO MAKE SURE NO ONE'S FAKING.
FIRE AT MOANS.
AT MOVEMENT.
GIVE THEM THE WHOLE TWO HUNDRED ROUNDS.
JUST TO BE ABSOLUTELY SURE.

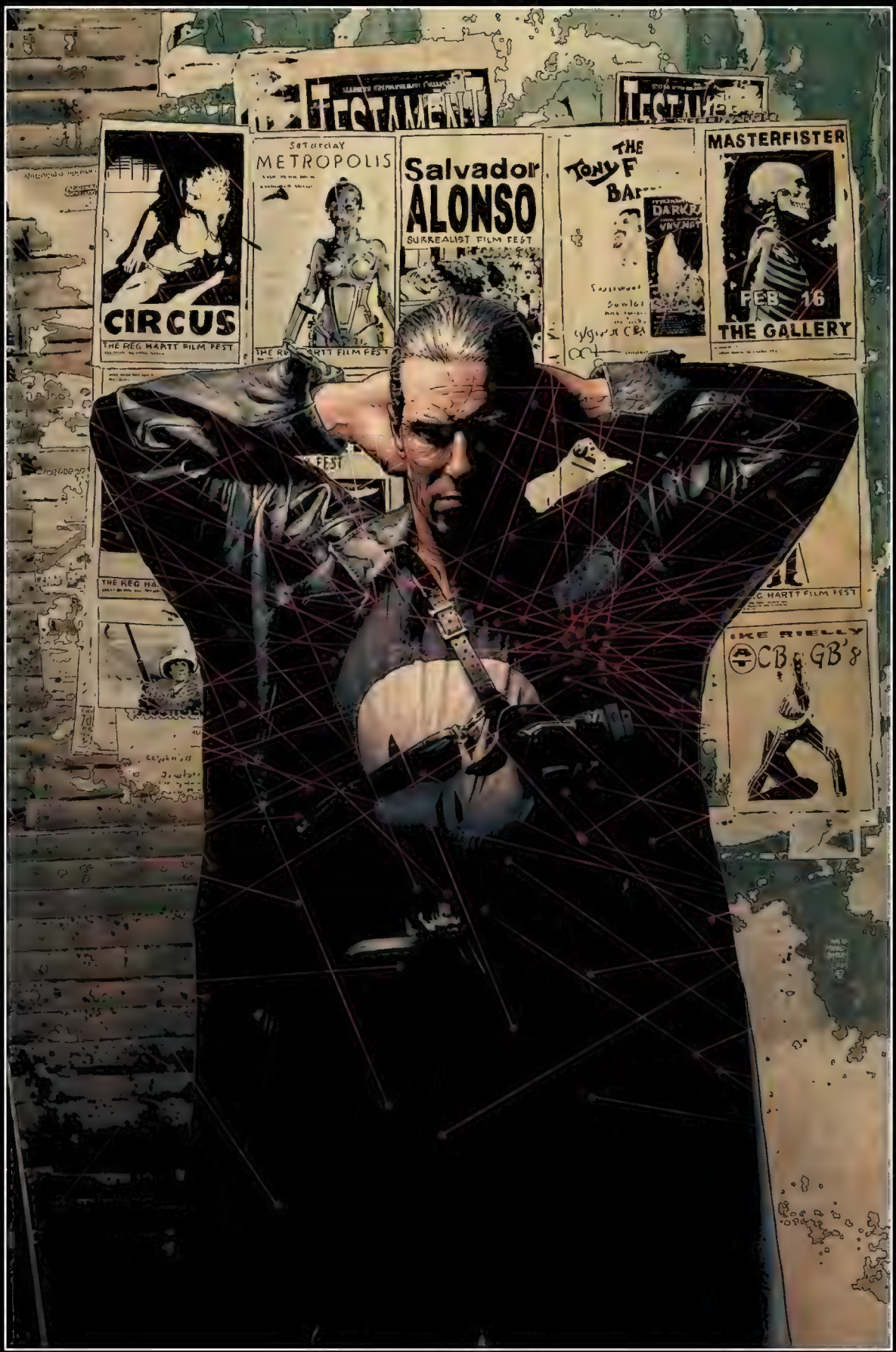
I CAN'T FUCKING BELIEVE I'M SEEING THIS...
GUY'S A WORKER, ALL RIGHT.
HE'S A PSYCHO...
HE'S MORE THAN WE COULD POSSIBLY HAVE HOPED FOR.
LOOK AT THAT.
OFF HE STROLLS.
MISTER BETHELL? SIR, I'M GOING TO HAVE TO CUT THE FEED, NASA IS GETTING A LITTLE BIT ANTSY...
THAT'S OKAY.

AND FAT BOY RECKONS HE CAN TAKE THIS FUCKER...?
HOW'S THE BUDGET HOLDING UP?
ROOM SERVICE
KNOCK YOURSELF OUT. GET ME A GREEN SALAD AND A DIET COKE, I'M GOING TO HAVE A WORD WITH OUR FRIEND.
ASK HIM HOW HE'S GONNA TAKE THIS GUY.
ASK HIM WHAT THE FUCK HE'S THINKING.
SO.
THAT COULD JUST AS EASILY HAVE BEEN AVOIDED.
I'VE A RIGHT TO SEE MY INVESTMENT IN ACTION, MICRO.
YOU'VE GOT TWO DOZEN THREE-INCH-THICK F.B.I. FILES ON HIM.
YOU DIDN'T NEED TO SEE ANYTHING.

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SAID TO HOLD OFF AT THE CEMETERY...
HE GOES THERE ONCE A YEAR. IT'S THE ONE PLACE AND TIME I COULD BE SURE OF FINDING HIM.
BUT TO DO IT THERE WOULD BE...
INDECENT.
YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE SOME KIND OF MOVE SOON, THOUGH, AREN'T YOU? WE CAN'T ACCESS THE SATELLITE FOR SUSTAINED PERIODS, WE COULD EASILY LOSE HIM AGAIN...
WE KNOW WHERE HE'S BASED NOW. HAVE ROTH AND O'BRIEN QUIT GROUND SURVEILLANCE; I DON'T TRUST THEM NOT TO SCREW IT UP.
THEY DID ALL RIGHT WHEN THEY ACQUIRED HIM THIS MORNING.
THEY WERE LUCKY HIS HEAD WAS SOMEWHERE ELSE, THAT'S ALL.
AND TELL ROTH: YES.
I CAN HANDLE FRANK CASTLE.


SOON?
SOON.
I KNOW HOW HE OPERATES. I KNOW HIS ROUTINE, INASMUCH AS HE HAS ONE. I CAN TAKE HIM.
WHEN THE TIME COMES, I CAN PUT HIM DOWN LIKE A RABID DOG.
I'M HIS ONLY FRIEND IN ALL THE WORLD.

PUNISHER #2


TESTAMENT
CIRCUS
THE REG HARTT FILM FEST
Saturday
METROPOLIS
Salvador
ALONSO
SURREALIST FILM FEST
THE
TONY F
BAr
DARKER
MASTERFISTER
FEB 16
THE GALLERY
IKE RIELLY
CB's GB's

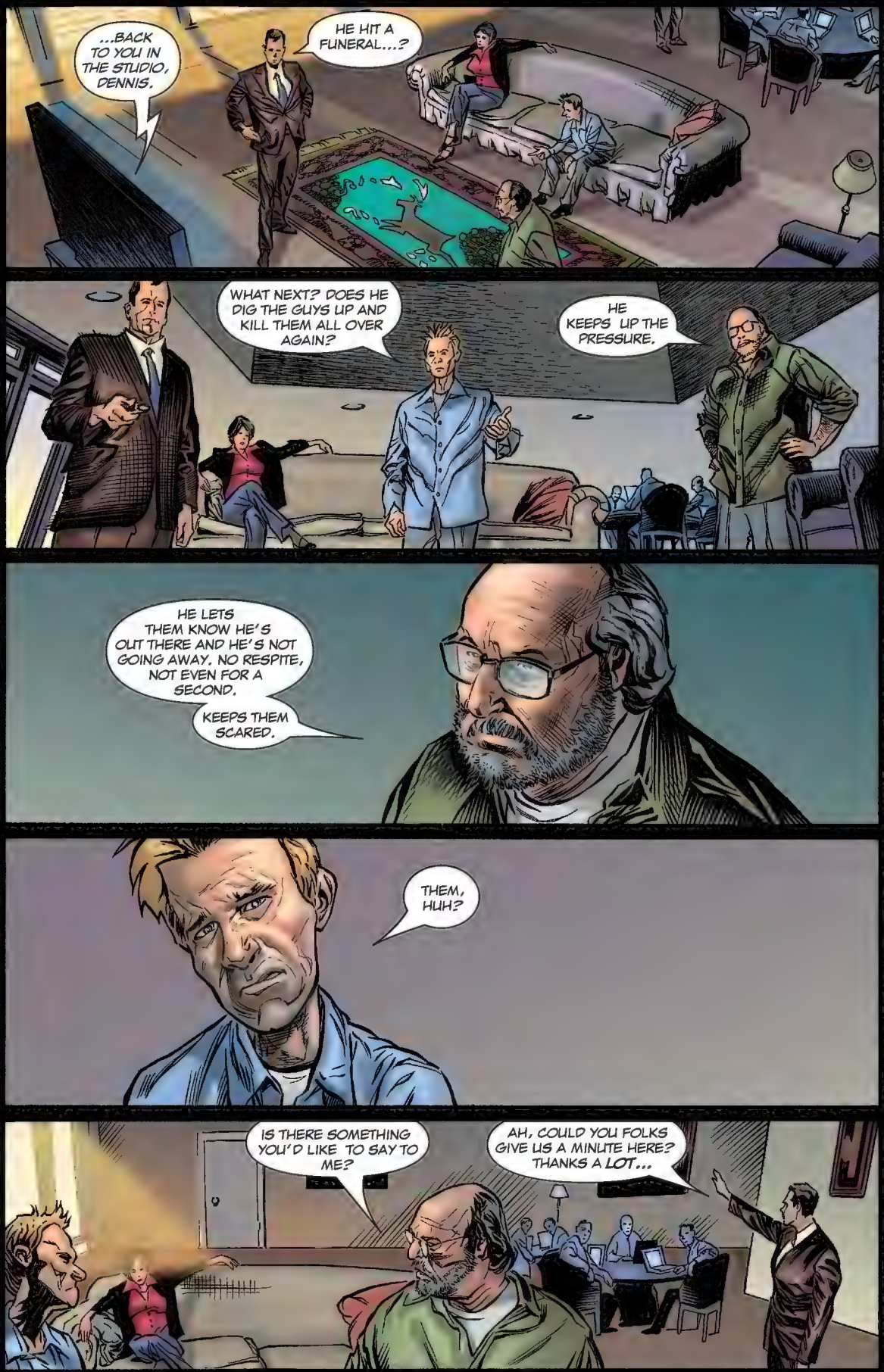
TAKE THE KIDS BACK TO THE CAR. GO ON, I'LL FOLLOW YOU.
JUST GO.
LOT MORE A' THESE TO FUCKIN' DO, I TELL YA.
MASSIMO GIOVANNI CESARE
1904-2004
BELOVED HUSBAND AND FATHER
YOU SAID A FUCKIN' MOUTHFUL. AN' WE'RE GONNA BE BURYIN' GUYS FROM NOW 'TIL FUCKIN' I-DON'T-KNOW-WHEN UNLESS WE TAKE CARE A' THIS COCKSUCKER FOR GOOD.
YOU RUNNIN' THINGS NOW THEN, LENNY?
DID I FUCKIN' SAY THAT? DID I?
SEE, THIS IS HOW WE ALWAYS FUCK OURSELVES INNA ASS, SQUABBLIN' OVER SHIT AN' LOSIN' SIGHTA THE BIG PICTURE...

HHHH.
ANYONE GOT ANYTHIN' CONSTRUCTIVE TO SAY?
WE'RE DOIN' WHAT WE CAN, LENNY. BUT...
THIS IS THE PUNISHER WE'RE TALKIN' ABOUT, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
...HE DON'T TALK TO ANYONE, HE DON'T BUY ANYTHIN' FROM ANYONE... I MEAN HOW DO YA GET A LINE ONNA GUY CUT HIMSELF OFF FROM A' HUMAN RACE, RIGHT?
AN' ON TOPPA THAT, HE'S SOME KINDA NAVY BERET GREEN DELTA FORCE PRICK OR SOMETHIN'. HE'S SO FAR OUTTA OUR LEAGUE IT'S FUCKIN' SCARY...
NO.
NO, I DON'T BUY THAT.
THERE HAS TO BE A WAY TO DO IT.
THERE HAS TO BE A WAY TO KILL THIS FUCKIN' GUY.

IN THE BEGINNING

PART TWO

YOU GET THE OTHER GUY ON THE ROPES.
YOU KEEP HIM THERE.
YOU MANGLE HIS EARS. FILL HIS EYES UP WITH BLOOD. PULP HIS KIDNEYS. GRIND UP HIS RIBS.
DON'T LET UP.
AND IF HE STILL WON'T HIT THE CANVAS--
YOU GO ON AND BLEED HIM TO DEATH.


...BACK TO YOU IN THE STUDIO, DENNIS.
HE HIT A FUNERAL...?
WHAT NEXT? DOES HE DIG THE GUYS UP AND KILL THEM ALL OVER AGAIN?
HE KEEPS UP THE PRESSURE.
HE LETS THEM KNOW HE'S OUT THERE AND HE'S NOT GOING AWAY. NO RESPITE, NOT EVEN FOR A SECOND.
KEEPS THEM SCARED.
THEM, HUH?
IS THERE SOMETHING YOU'D LIKE TO SAY TO ME?
AH, COULD YOU FOLKS GIVE US A MINUTE HERE? THANKS A LOT...

GO DOWN TO THE BAR AND HAVE A DRINK OR SOMETHING. ANYTHING YOU WANT, JUST PUT IT ON THE ROOM.
THANKS, GUYS.
BECAUSE MOMMY AND DADDY ARE GOING TO HAVE A FIGHT...
OH, LISTEN, THIS GUY IS SO FULL OF FUCKING SHIT IT MAKES MY TEETH HURT...!
HIS OLD BUDDY THE PUNISHER WIPES OUT FORTY-TWO WISEGUYS AND PUTS, WHAT IS IT, SEVEN MORE ON THE CRITICAL LIST, AND NOW FAT BOY'S GIVING US A LECTURE ON THE FUCKER'S M.O.! WITH A FOND LITTLE TWINKLE IN HIS EYE!
AND WHAT DID FAT BOY ASSURE US HE COULD DO? TAKE DOWN THE PUNISHER. AND HERE WE ARE, WE'VE KNOWN WHERE THE GUY LIVES FOR THE LAST FIVE DAYS, AND HOW FAR HAS OUR TUBBY HERO GOTTEN?
WELL?
HE'S SCARED. HE'S FUCKING TERRIFIED.
HE'S SEEN HIS PAL IN ACTION AGAIN AND ALL OF A SUDDEN HE'S NOT SO FUCKING SURE OF HIMSELF, SO HE PLAYS FOR TIME AND HE DICKS US AROUND AND--
WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING?
I'M TAKING HOLD OF YOUR BALLS.

WHAT-- GET--GET THE FUCK--
STAY STILL.
I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING TO YOU YET. WE'RE STILL COOL. AND THAT'S THE WAY WE WANT TO KEEP THINGS: NICE AND COOL.
I THINK YOU'VE GOTTEN THE WRONG IDEA ABOUT ME, ROTH.
FIRST OF ALL, I'M NOT WHAT I LOOK LIKE. BUT THAT MUST BE ALL TOO APPARENT RIGHT NOW.
SECOND OF ALL, MY NAME IS MICRO.
NOT FAT BOY.
THE THIRD THING IS THAT I WORKED WITH FRANK CASTLE FOR TEN YEARS. I HELPED HIM KILL OVER EIGHT HUNDRED PEOPLE.
ANYONE KNOWS HIM BETTER THAN I DO IS LONG SINCE IN THEIR GRAVE.

I HACKED COMPUTERS TO FIND HIM TARGETS. I CUSTOMIZED GUNS AND AMMUNITION. I PUT HIM IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME TO KILL THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PEOPLE; WITHOUT ME THE BODY COUNT FOR THOSE TEN YEARS WOULD BE A THIRD OF WHAT IT IS.
I TURNED A LONE GUNMAN INTO A MACHINE THAT RUNS AT OPTIMUM EFFICIENCY. BECAUSE OF ME, WHAT HE DOES CAN TRULY BE DEFINED AS WAR.
SO WHEN I WATCH HIM RACK UP FORTY-TWO DEAD AND SEVEN WOUNDED--A RATIO THAT TELLS YOU EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW, BY THE WAY--
YES.
YOU'RE GODDAMNED FUCKING RIGHT I'M SCARED.

BETHELL, GET YOUR PEOPLE READY.
WE'LL GO TONIGHT.
AHRRM.
MS. O'BRIEN, COULD YOU, AH, COULD YOU ORDER THE ALPHA TEAM TO READINESS? INFORM THEM THAT WE HAVE A GO AND THAT BRIEFING WILL BE AT EIGHTEEN HUNDRED?
I DOUBT IT. I DON'T KNOW THEIR PHONE NUMBER.
THIS ISN'T WASHINGTON, AND I'M NOT YOUR SECRETARY.
RIGHT, OF COURSE.
SORRY.
YOU GET A BONER?
SHUT THE FUCK UP.

I'LL SAY IT'S QUIET...
AFTER THAT SHIT YOU PULLED LAST WEEK THE GUINEAS' VE GONE TO GROUND BIG TIME. MY FRIEND JOANNE SAYS BENSONHURST'S LIKE A GHOST TOWN.
I GOT THIS OTHER FRIEND, MAGGIE? SHE FUCKS THIS GUY IN THE ANGELIS CREW, HE TOLD HER EVERYONE'S BARRICADED IN THEIR BASEMENTS. THERE'S NO WORD FROM THE TOP BECAUSE ALL OF A SUDDEN THERE IS NO TOP.
AN' HERBIE OVER THERE, NO-ONE'S COME BY TO COLLECT HIS TAXES.
EVERY TUESDAY, REGULAR AS CLOCKWORK, THIS BIG FAT FUCK COMES AROUND SO HERBIE CAN KISS HIS ASS AND FORK OVER TWO G'S. BUT NOT THIS TIME.
HERB'S MAKIN' THE MOST'VE IT, TOO. I FEEL LIKE MY FUCKIN' HAND IS FALLIN' OFF.
HOW OLD IS SHE?
HER? OH, JESUS.
I DUNNO.

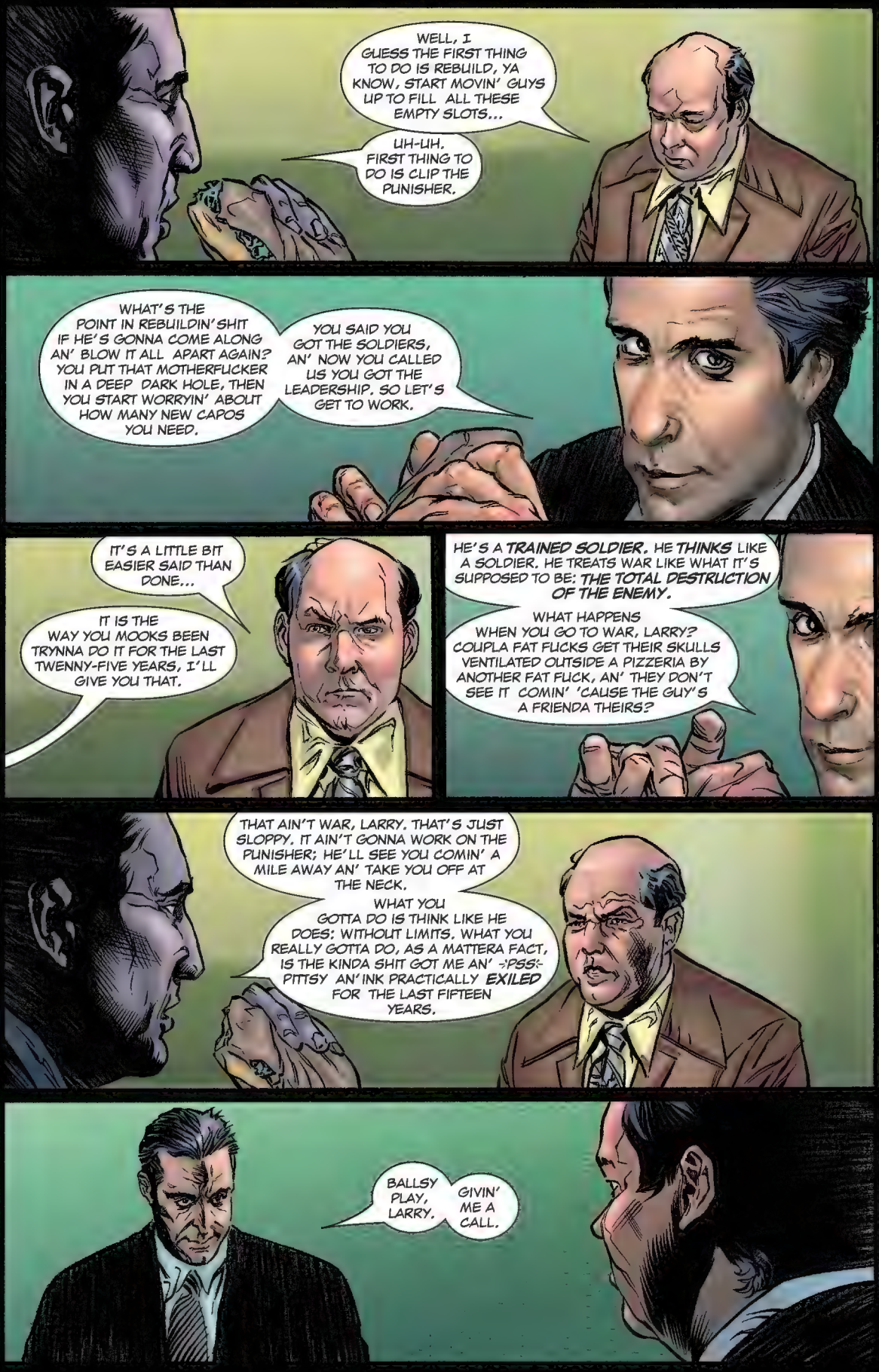
I THINK SHE SAID SHE WAS FROM POUGHKEEPSIE. HERB FOUND HER IN SOME CLUB OR OTHER.
HE GOT HER HOOKED ON ANYTHING YET?
I DUNNO.
I DON'T KNOW, OKAY? WHAT'RE YOU, A FUCKIN' SOCIAL WORKER NOW?
OH, FUCK ME.

GIVE HER HALF OF THIS AND PUT HER ON A BUS TO POUGHKEEPSIE.
TELL THE NEW GUY TO WATCH HIMSELF.
THAT WAS NOT MY FUCKIN' FAULT...

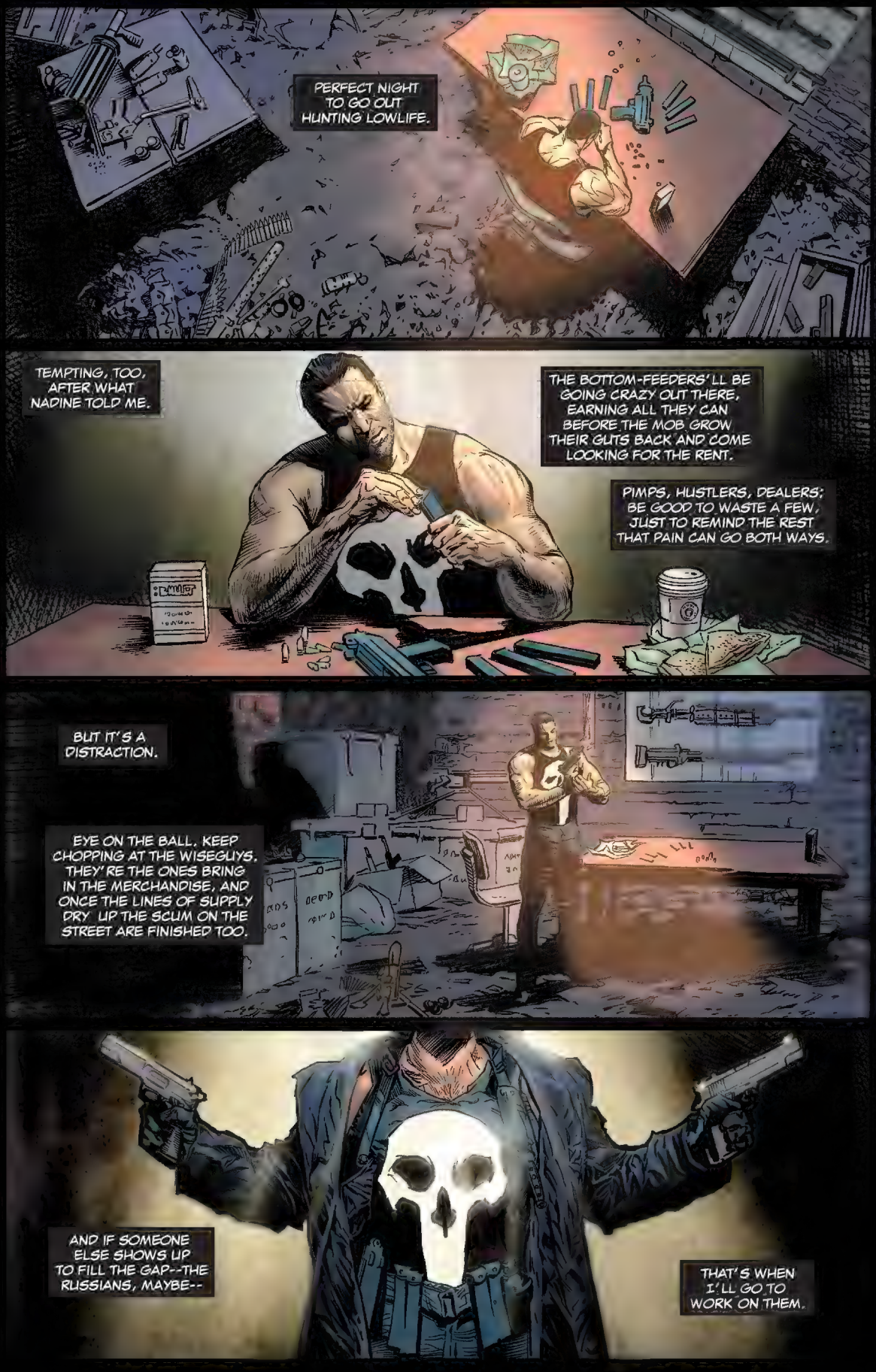
MISTER CAVELLA?
NICKY, LARRY. WE'RE ALL FRIENDS HERE.
THIS IS PITTSY AN' INK, THEY MADE THE TRIP DOWN WITH ME LAST NIGHT.
HEY, GOOD TO MEET YA.
SO YOU GUYS ARE FROM BOSTON TOO, HUH? DID YA LEAVE YA CAHH INNA PAHKIN' LAHT?

WHAT'RE YOU, SOME KINDA FUCK?
HUH.
FELLAS, LARRY'S REACHIN' OUT TO US HERE.
RIGHT... UH...
WELL, YOU, YOU KNOW THE SITUATION: AFTER LAST WEEK WE GOT NO ONE CALLIN' THE SHOTS. WE STILL GOT PLENTY A' SOLDIERS, BUT THE ONLY GUY LEFT HIGHER'N THAT IS BIG JACKIE AN' HE'S BREATHIN' THROUGH A FUCKIN' TUBE...
I MEAN THAT MOTHERFUCKER TOOK OUT EVERYBODY--GUYS VISITIN' FROM ALL OVER, SURE, BUT THERE WAS SO MANY EAST COAST PEOPLE THERE THAT WE GOT FUCKIN' GUTTED.
AN...NOW NOBODY KNOWS WHAT TO FUCKIN' DO...
SO YOU GOT THE BRIGHT IDEA TO CALL ME.
LET THE PAST BE THE PAST. THE RETURN A' THE PRODIGAL.
EXACTLY!
EXACTLY!
LARRY, IN ANY OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES I'D BE ABOUT AS WELCOME IN NEW YORK AS A FART IN AN ASTRONAUT'S SUIT. SO DON'T GET TOO EXCITED JUST YET.
AN' LET'S LET THAT BE THE CLOSEST YOU EVER COME TO TRYIN' TO BULLSHIT ME.

WHO HAD THE CHOWDER?
ME.
CHEESEBURGER MEDIUM, CHEESEBURGER WELL DONE. ENJOY.
WHAT THE FUCK IS THIS?
CHOWDER. NEW ENGLAND CLAM CHOWDER, LIKE IT SAYS ON THE MENU.
IT'S FUCKIN' RED.
IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE RED...
SEE, THAT'S HOW THEY MAKE IT DOWN HERE, IT AIN'T LIKE WHERE YOU GUYS--
YOU SHUT THE FUCK UP.
IT'S S'POSED TO BE WHITE. MENU SAYS NEW ENGLAND CLAM CHOWDER, YOU FUCKIN' MAKE IT LIKE IN FUCKIN' NEW ENGLAND.
BUT--
YOU SHUT THE FUCK UP TOO. GO TELL YA CHEF HE'S A SICK FUCK.
NOW GET THIS FUCKIN' SHIT AWAY FROM ME AN' BRING ME A BOWLA CHICKEN SOUP, YA HEAR ME?
AN' TRY NOTTA HAVE YA FUCKIN' PERIOD IN IT THIS TIME!
WHERE WERE WE...?


WELL, I GUESS THE FIRST THING TO DO IS REBUILD, YA KNOW, START MOVIN' GUYS UP TO FILL ALL THESE EMPTY SLOTS...
UH-UH. FIRST THING TO DO IS CLIP THE PUNISHER.
WHAT'S THE POINT IN REBUILDIN' SHIT IF HE'S GONNA COME ALONG AN' BLOW IT ALL APART AGAIN? YOU PUT THAT MOTHERFUCKER IN A DEEP DARK HOLE, THEN YOU START WORRYIN' ABOUT HOW MANY NEW CAPOS YOU NEED.
YOU SAID YOU GOT THE SOLDIERS, AN' NOW YOU CALLED US YOU GOT THE LEADERSHIP. SO LET'S GET TO WORK.
IT'S A LITTLE BIT EASIER SAID THAN DONE...
IT IS THE WAY YOU MOOKS BEEN TRYNNA DO IT FOR THE LAST TWENNY-FIVE YEARS, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT.
HE'S A TRAINED SOLDIER. HE THINKS LIKE A SOLDIER. HE TREATS WAR LIKE WHAT IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE: THE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF THE ENEMY.
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GO TO WAR, LARRY? COUPLA FAT FUCKS GET THEIR SKULLS VENTILATED OUTSIDE A PIZZERIA BY ANOTHER FAT FUCK, AN' THEY DON'T SEE IT COMIN' 'CAUSE THE GUY'S A FRIENDA THEIRS?
THAT AIN'T WAR, LARRY. THAT'S JUST SLOPPY. IT AIN'T GONNA WORK ON THE PUNISHER; HE'LL SEE YOU COMIN' A MILE AWAY AN' TAKE YOU OFF AT THE NECK.
WHAT YOU GOTTA DO IS THINK LIKE HE DOES: WITHOUT LIMITS. WHAT YOU REALLY GOTTA DO, AS A MATTERA FACT, IS THE KINDA SHIT GOT ME AN' -PSS- PITTSY AN' INK PRACTICALLY EXILED FOR THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS.
BALLSY PLAY, LARRY.
GIVIN' ME A CALL.

UH...
YOU THERE WHEN CESARE GOT WHACKED?
I-- YEAH, YEAH, I WAS. THAT'S RIGHT.
THE POOR OLD GUY, ONE MINUTE HE'S ENJOYIN' HIS HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY PARTY AN' THE NEXT HE'S LYIN' DEAD ONNA FLOOR...
HOW'D YA TELL A' DIFFERENCE?
WHAT?
INK'S JUST BREAKIN' YOUR BALLS, LARRY.
ALWAYS BEEN A FUCKIN' PISSER, THIS GUY.
DON CESARE WAS A GREAT MAN, WE ALL KNOW THIS. BUT ALL KIDDIN' ASIDE: WE AIN'T GONNA JUST SOLVE THIS PROBLEM A' YOURS AN' GO HOME AGAIN, UNDERSTAND?
WE'RE GONNA SOLVE IT, SURE.
AN' THEN WE'RE GONNA HAVE A TALK ABOUT EXACTLY WHO RUNS WHAT.


PERFECT NIGHT TO GO OUT HUNTING LOWLIFE.
TEMPTING, TOO, AFTER WHAT NADINE TOLD ME.
THE BOTTOM-FEEDERS'LL BE GOING CRAZY OUT THERE, EARNING ALL THEY CAN BEFORE THE MOB GROW THEIR GUTS BACK AND COME LOOKING FOR THE RENT.
PIMPS, HUSTLERS, DEALERS; BE GOOD TO WASTE A FEW, JUST TO REMIND THE REST THAT PAIN CAN GO BOTH WAYS.
BUT IT'S A DISTRACTION.
EYE ON THE BALL. KEEP CHOPPING AT THE WISEGUYS. THEY'RE THE ONES BRING IN THE MERCHANDISE, AND ONCE THE LINES OF SUPPLY DRY UP THE SCUM ON THE STREET ARE FINISHED TOO.
AND IF SOMEONE ELSE SHOWS UP TO FILL THE GAP--THE RUSSIANS, MAYBE--
THAT'S WHEN I'LL GO TO WORK ON THEM.

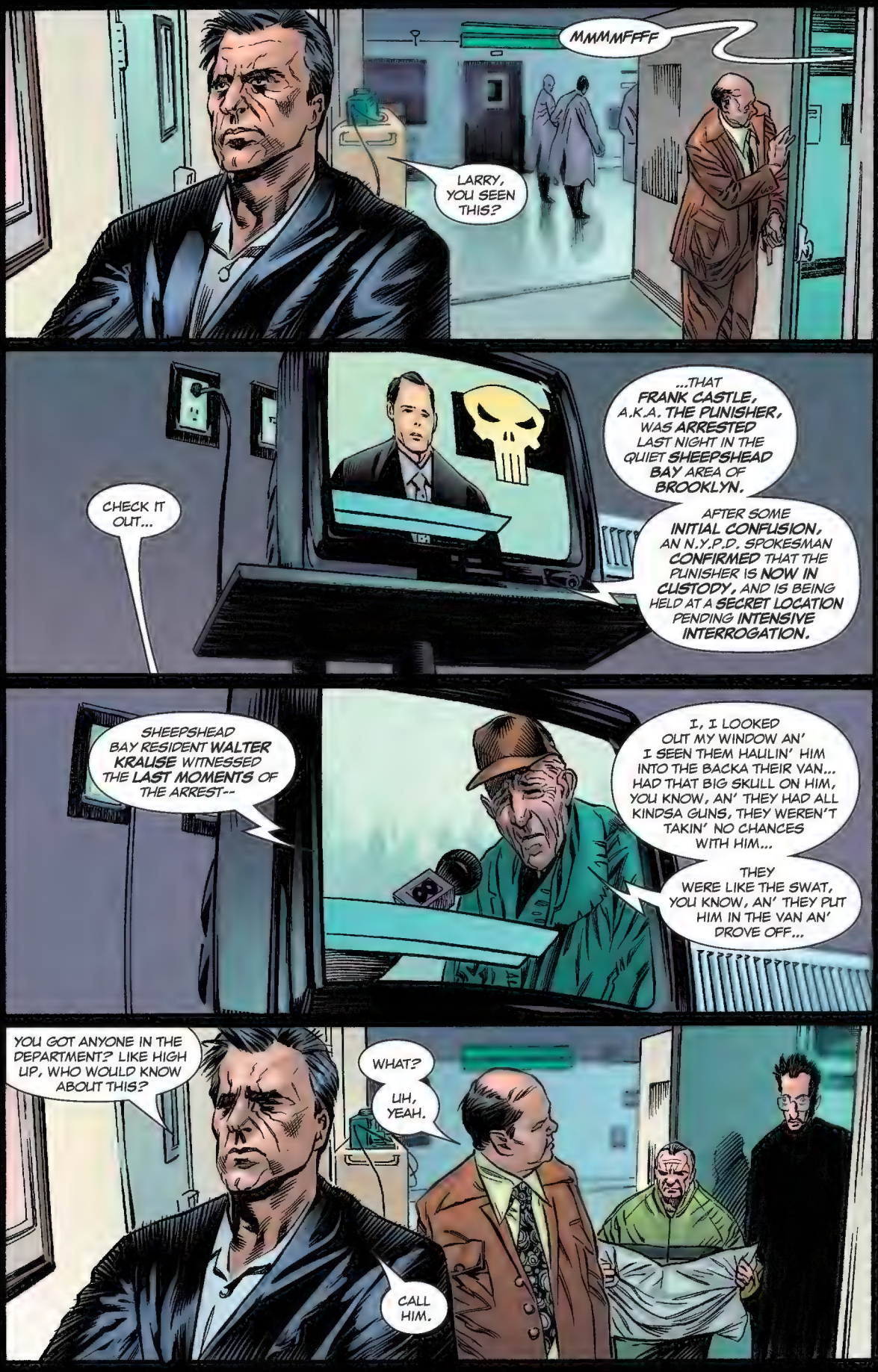
IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG, THESE GUYS'LL BE WITH YOU IN A SECOND...
IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG, I'LL BE DEAD. THERE'S NO POINT THROWING THEIR LIVES AFTER MINE.
THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE PRETTY GOOD. SOME OF THEM ARE EX-DELTA.
I DON'T CARE IF THEY'RE HELL'S OWN SPECIAL FORCES, HE'LL GO THROUGH THEM LIKE A BUZZ-SAW. JUST BE READY TO DEPLOY IF THINGS SOMEHOW GO RIGHT.
OKAY, I'M GETTING OUT. I'M GOING TO WAIT 'TIL HE'S GONE PAST US.
DON'T SLAM THE DOOR BEHIND ME...

FRANK.
AREN'T YOU GOING TO ASK WHAT I'M DOING HERE?

IN THE END I GUESS IT'S EASY AFTER ALL.

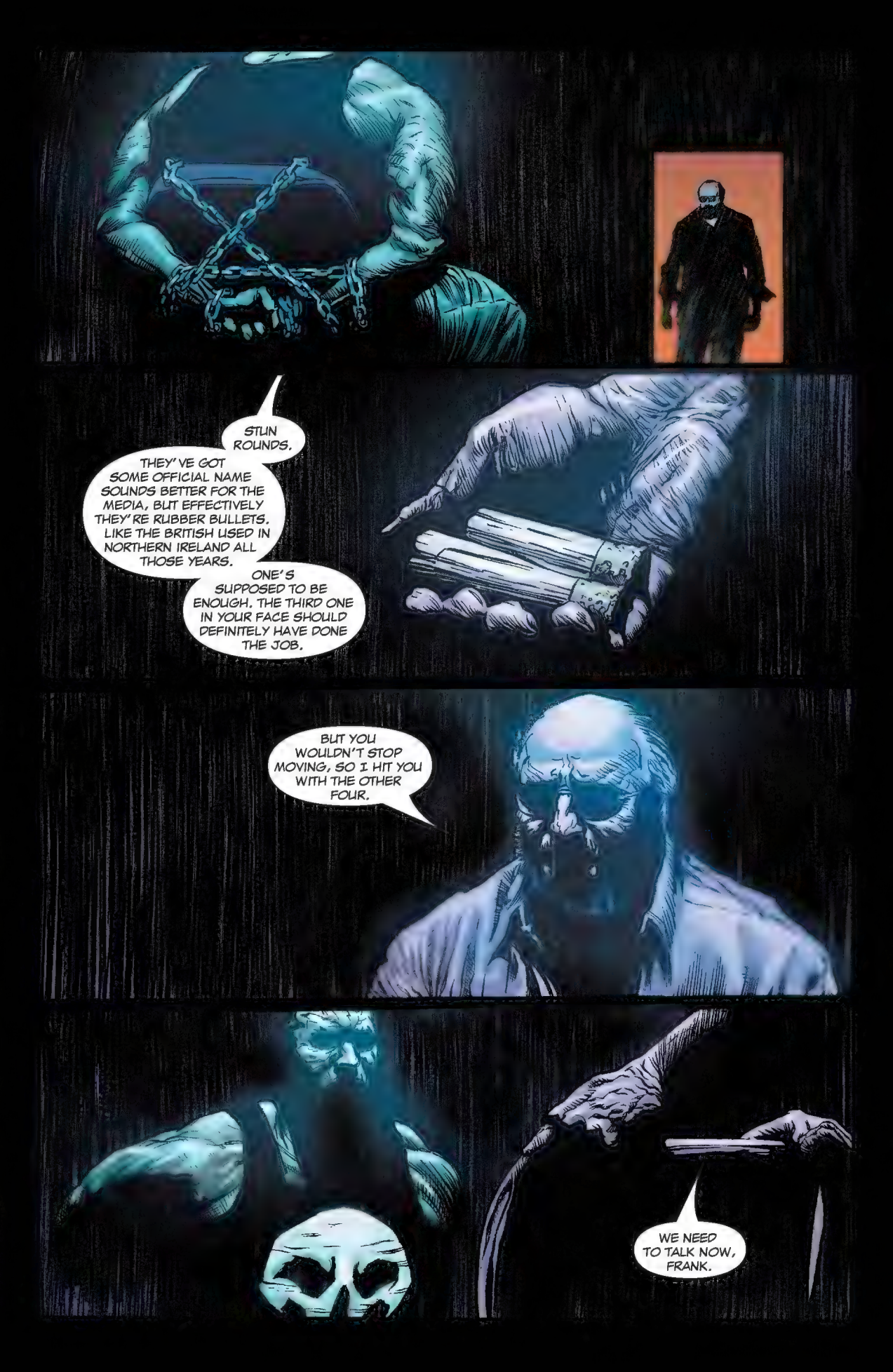
PUNISHER #3

NICKY FUCKIN' CAVELLA--?
YOU GONE OUTTA YOUR FUCKIN' MIND? YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MOTHERLESS PIECE A' SHIT DID?
BUT JACKIE--
LARRY, ARE YOU TRYNNA GIVE ME A HEART ATTACK HERE? FINISH WHAT THE PUNISHER STARTED, IS THAT THE FUCKIN' IDEA?
WELL THAT'S WHY I CALLED NICKY, I THOUGHT HE COULD HELP WITH THE PUNISHER--
FUCK YOU.
BUT--
FUCK YOU. I AM THE LAST CAPO, LARRY, THE LAST GUY LEFT WHO CAN SHOW ANY FUCKIN' LEADERSHIP HERE--AN' I AM TELLIN' YOU TO SEND THAT FUCKIN' PRICK HOME, CAPICE?
LAST FUCKIN' THING WE NEED IS THE KINDA SHIT CAVELLA AN' THEM EVIL FUCKSA HIS GET UP TO! GET RIDDA THE BASTARD! AN' TELL HIM FUCK YOU FROM ME!
OKAY...!
GO!!
HHHH.
JESUS.
CHRIST!

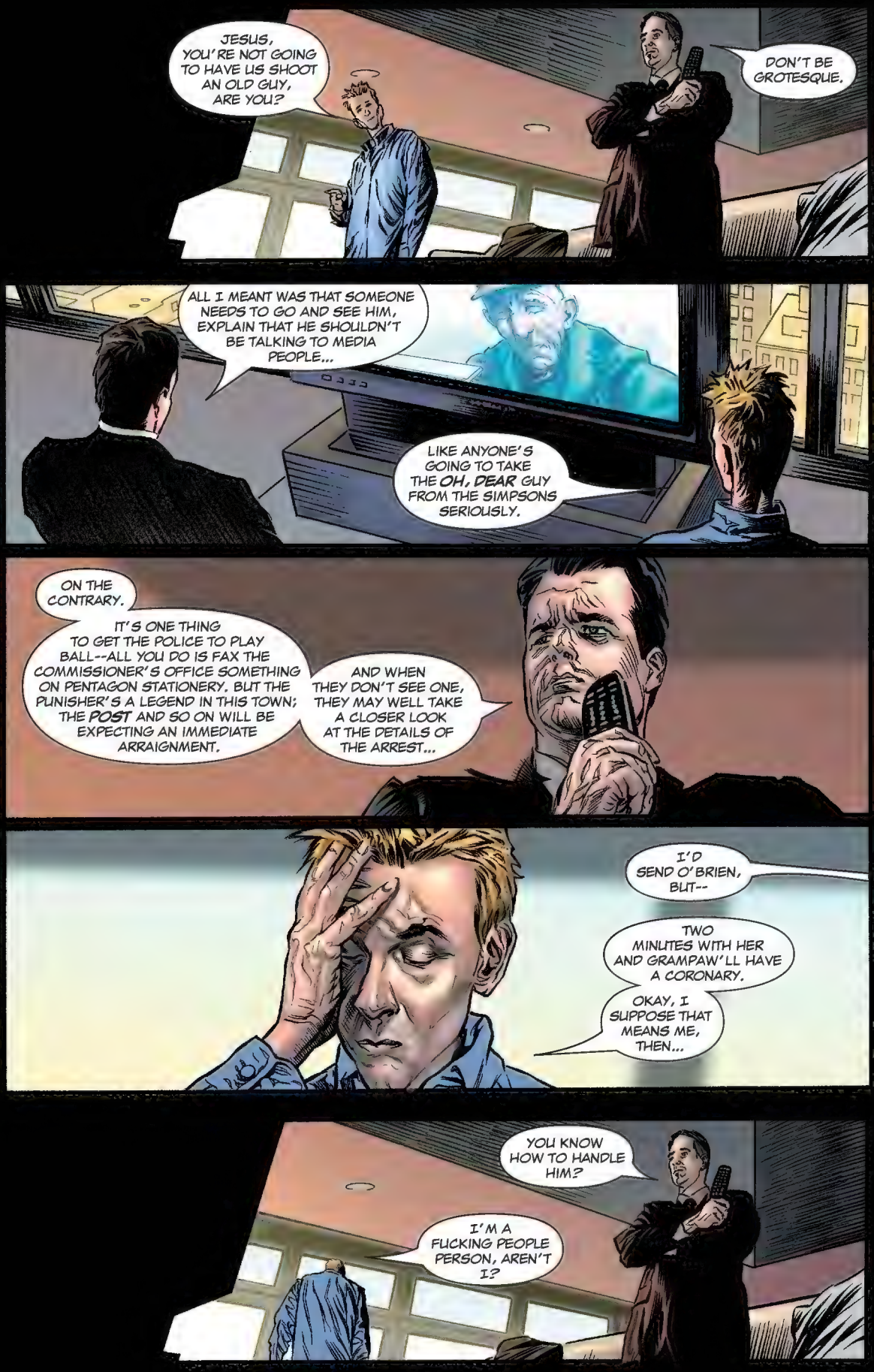

MMMMFFFF
LARRY, YOU SEEN THIS?
...THAT FRANK CASTLE, A.K.A. THE PUNISHER, WAS ARRESTED LAST NIGHT IN THE QUIET SHEEPSHEAD BAY AREA OF BROOKLYN.
AFTER SOME INITIAL CONFUSION, AN N.Y.P.D. SPOKESMAN CONFIRMED THAT THE PUNISHER IS NOW IN CUSTODY, AND IS BEING HELD AT A SECRET LOCATION PENDING INTENSIVE INTERROGATION.
CHECK IT OUT...
SHEEPSHEAD BAY RESIDENT WALTER KRAUSE WITNESSED THE LAST MOMENTS OF THE ARREST--
I, I LOOKED OUT MY WINDOW AN' I SEEN THEM HAULIN' HIM INTO THE BACKA THEIR VAN... HAD THAT BIG SKULL ON HIM, YOU KNOW, AN' THEY HAD ALL KINDSA GUNS, THEY WEREN'T TAKIN' NO CHANCES WITH HIM...
THEY WERE LIKE THE SWAT, YOU KNOW, AN' THEY PUT HIM IN THE VAN AN' DROVE OFF...
YOU GOT ANYONE IN THE DEPARTMENT? LIKE HIGH UP, WHO WOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS?
WHAT?
UH, YEAH.
CALL HIM.

IN THE BEGINNING
PART 3
'CAUSE I DON'T BUY THIS SHIT.
NOT EVEN FOR A FUCKIN' SECOND.

FRANK.


STUN ROUNDS.
THEY'VE GOT SOME OFFICIAL NAME SOUNDS BETTER FOR THE MEDIA, BUT EFFECTIVELY THEY'RE RUBBER BULLETS. LIKE THE BRITISH USED IN NORTHERN IRELAND ALL THOSE YEARS.
ONE'S SUPPOSED TO BE ENOUGH. THE THIRD ONE IN YOUR FACE SHOULD DEFINITELY HAVE DONE THE JOB.
BUT YOU WOULDN'T STOP MOVING, SO I HIT YOU WITH THE OTHER FOUR.
WE NEED TO TALK NOW, FRANK.

ANYTHING GOOD YET?
MICRO'S DOING ALL THE TALKING.
BEATS ME WHY YOU'RE LISTENING, O'BRIEN. IT'S GOING TO BE ON TAPE ANYWAY.
JUST IN CASE HE DOES SAY SOMETHING. I'M CURIOUS WHAT HIS VOICE SOUNDS LIKE.
PROBABLY ALL DEEP AND DARK AND GROWLY; THAT SHIT ALWAYS GETS ME SOAKING WET...
GUM?
NO...
WHERE THE FUCK DID YOU FIND HER, ANYWAY?
SAME SORT OF PLACE I FOUND YOU, MISTER ROTH. YOU KNOW THAT.
THIS EYEWITNESS THEY'VE DUG UP, THIS IS THE ONE ASPECT OF THE WHOLE THING THAT CONCERNS ME...
HIM?
HIM.
SOMETHING MAY HAVE TO BE DONE.


JESUS, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HAVE US SHOOT AN OLD GUY, ARE YOU?
DON'T BE GROTESQUE.
ALL I MEANT WAS THAT SOMEONE NEEDS TO GO AND SEE HIM, EXPLAIN THAT HE SHOULDN'T BE TALKING TO MEDIA PEOPLE...
LIKE ANYONE'S GOING TO TAKE THE OH, DEAR GUY FROM THE SIMPSONS SERIOUSLY.
ON THE CONTRARY.
IT'S ONE THING TO GET THE POLICE TO PLAY BALL--ALL YOU DO IS FAX THE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE SOMETHING ON PENTAGON STATIONERY. BUT THE PUNISHER'S A LEGEND IN THIS TOWN; THE POST AND SO ON WILL BE EXPECTING AN IMMEDIATE ARRAIGNMENT.
AND WHEN THEY DON'T SEE ONE, THEY MAY WELL TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THE DETAILS OF THE ARREST...
I'D SEND O'BRIEN, BUT--
TWO MINUTES WITH HER AND GRAMPAW'LL HAVE A CORONARY.
OKAY, I SUPPOSE THAT MEANS ME, THEN...
YOU KNOW HOW TO HANDLE HIM?
I'M A FUCKING PEOPLE PERSON, AREN'T I?

WE NEED TO TALK BECAUSE WE HAVEN'T GOT MUCH TIME.
I WAS GOING TO TRY LOGIC, ASK YOU WHAT IT IS YOU THINK YOU'RE ACHIEVING.
I THOUGHT ABOUT APPEALING TO YOUR LOVE FOR YOUR COUNTRY--YOU'LL SEE WHY LATER--BUT I THINK THAT WENT ALONG WITH EVERYTHING ELSE WHEN YOU BECAME THE PUNISHER.
I EVEN CONSIDERED GUILT, YOU KNOW, MAKE YOU FACE UP TO THE HORROR OF THE BODYCOUNT YOU'VE RACKED UP. THAT'S WHEN I KNEW I WAS GETTING DESPERATE.
BUT IF I DON'T SHOW SOME RESULTS QUICKLY, BETHELL OUT THERE IS GOING TO HAVE YOU KILLED.
I TRULY AM SORRY, FRANK.

I KNEW IT WAS BULLSHIT.
YEAH, THAT'S WHAT THIS GUY TELLS ME. SAYS THESE PEOPLE BEEN IN TOWN ABOUT A MONTH, AN' THE DEPARTMENT GOT TOLD TO COOPERATE ONE HUNDRED PER.
LAST NIGHT THEY FINALLY GET WORD TO STAY CLEARA A STREET IN SHEEPSHEAD BAY--AN' BOOM, NEXT THING THEY KNOW THE FUCKIN' PUNISHER'S BEEN ARRESTED. NOT BY THEM, BUT...WELL. THEY DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS AN' THEY AIN'T ABOUT TO ASK.
ALL THEY'RE S'POSED TO DO NOW IS FEED THE MEDIA A LINE AN' STAND BY FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.
AN' ALL INNA NAME A' HOMELAND SECURITY, JESUS, THIS IS SOME SERIOUS SHIT...
LARRY, RIGHT NOW YOU COULD BUTTFUCK A GERMAN SHEPHERD ONNA TONIGHT SHOW AN' GET AWAY WITH IT, YOU REMEMBER TO SHOUT THAT AFTER YOU COME.
I DON'T LIKE WHERE THIS IS GOIN', NICKY. I MEAN THE FUCKIN' GOVERNMENT, WHAT DO THEY WANT WITH THE PUNISHER?
PROBABLY WORKIN' A FUCKIN' ANGLE, SAME AS ANY OTHER CREW.
TIME WE GOT INNA GAME, HERE.
YOU TRUST THIS TAME COP A' YOURS?

HE'S INTO US FOR THREE HUNDRED LARGE...
GET THE NAME A' THAT STREET OFF HIM. WE'RE GONNA GO TALK TO THAT LITTLE OLD GUY ON T.V., ONE SAYS HE SAW IT GO DOWN.
DRINK UP.
YOUR GUY INK OVER THERE, HOW COME HE'S CALLED THAT?
FIRST GUY HE KILLED WAS WITH A PEN.
STABBED HIM INNA NECK?
STABBED HIM INNA EYE, JUST KEPT PUSHIN' 'TIL HE HIT BRAIN AN' BEYOND.
JESUS...
WHAT ELSE IS HE GONNA DO? COCKSUCKER'S TWICE HIS SIZE, CHOKIN' HIM TO DEATH.
WHAT ABOUT PITTSY?
HEH...!

TRUST ME, LARRY.
YOU DON'T WANNA KNOW ABOUT PITTSY.
YO, PITTS!
...WHAT...
UH-UH.
YOU IMAGINE WHAT HE'LL BE LIKE WHEN I DO LET HIM LOOSE?

LISA WOULD BE THIRTY-SEVEN NOW. FRANK JUNIOR WOULD BE THIRTY-THREE.
YOU AND MARIA MIGHT BE GRANDPARENTS.
BUT YOU AREN'T AND YOU NEVER WILL BE, BECAUSE THEY AREN'T COMING BACK NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO.
I HELPED YOU ALL THOSE YEARS BECAUSE MY SON WAS MURDERED. THE RANDOMNESS OF THAT, THE WAY EVIL STRUCK SO CASUALLY, THEN CARRIED ON ITS MERRY WAY--I WANTED TO DO WHATEVER I COULD SO OTHERS WOULDN'T HAVE TO FACE THAT EMPTY, POINTLESS HORROR.
BUT CRIME NEVER ENDS. IT CLAIMS ITS VICTIMS, ACCIDENTAL OR INTENDED. AND AS LONG AS PEOPLE WANT THE THINGS THE LAW FORBIDS THEM HAVING, NOTHING YOU OR I OR ANYONE CAN DO WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
THAT'S WHY I HAD TO WALK AWAY.
BECAUSE YOU KNOW ALL THAT AND YET YOU DO WHAT YOU DO ANYWAY.

YOU KILL BECAUSE YOU LIKE IT, FRANK.
"MAYBE IT WAS IN YOU ALL ALONG, BUT...I BELIEVE YOU GOT A TASTE FOR IT IN VIETNAM. I KNOW ABOUT ALL THAT SCOUT-SNIPER WORK ON YOUR SECOND TOUR. I KNOW SOMETHING HAPPENED ON YOUR THIRD.
"YOU SEE, I BELIEVE SOME...DARKNESS... REACHED OUT TO YOU, FRANK.
"AND I BELIEVE YOU TOLD IT YES."

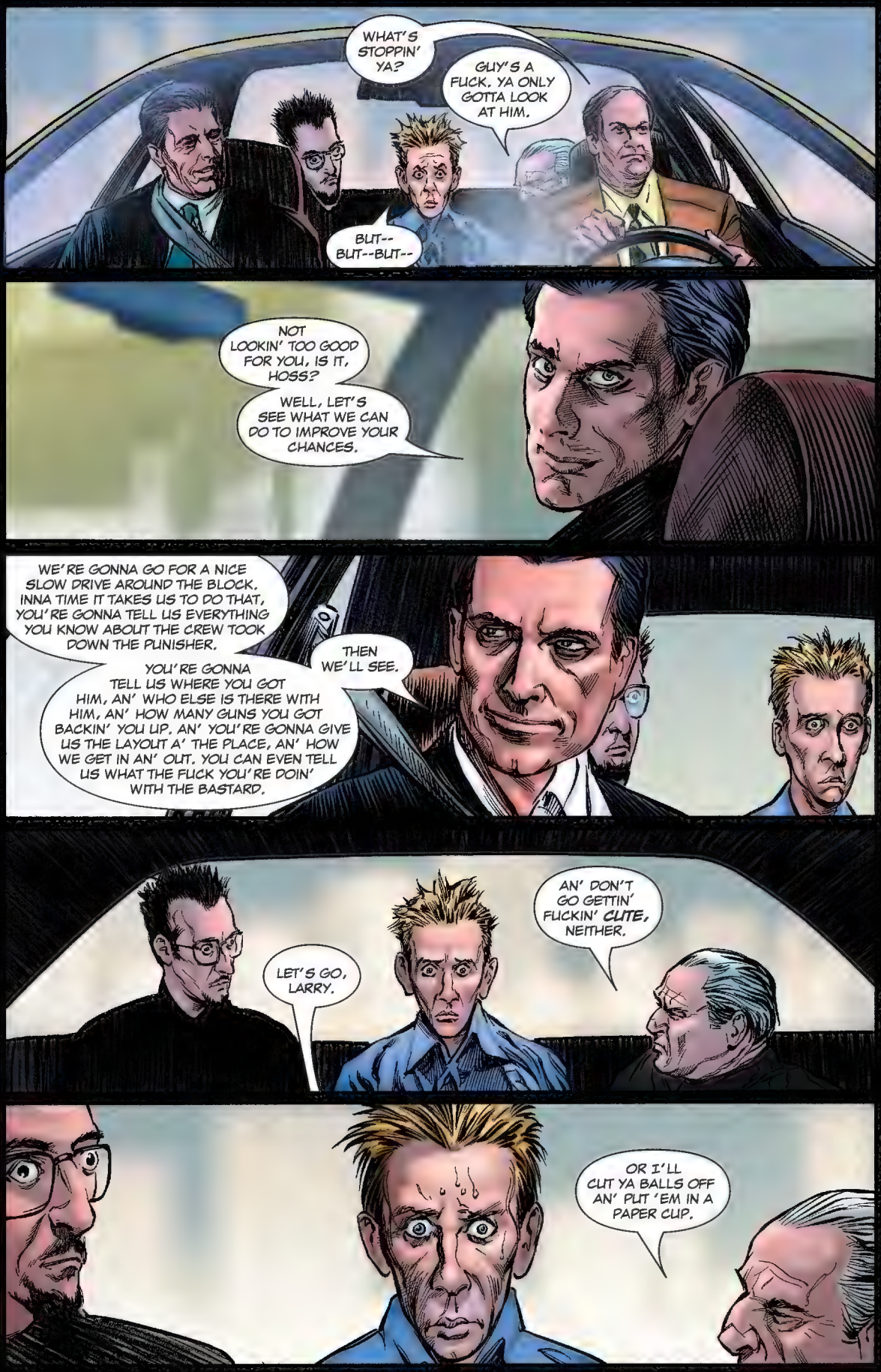
AFTER THAT, ALL IT WOULD TAKE WAS A CATASTROPHE OF SOME KIND, JUST TO DRIVE YOU OVER THE EDGE.
AND NOW YOU USE YOUR FAMILY AS AN EXCUSE FOR SOMETHING DREADFUL.
PUT THEM AWAY RIGHT NOW.
OR I GUARANTEE YOU'LL HAVE TO KILL ME.

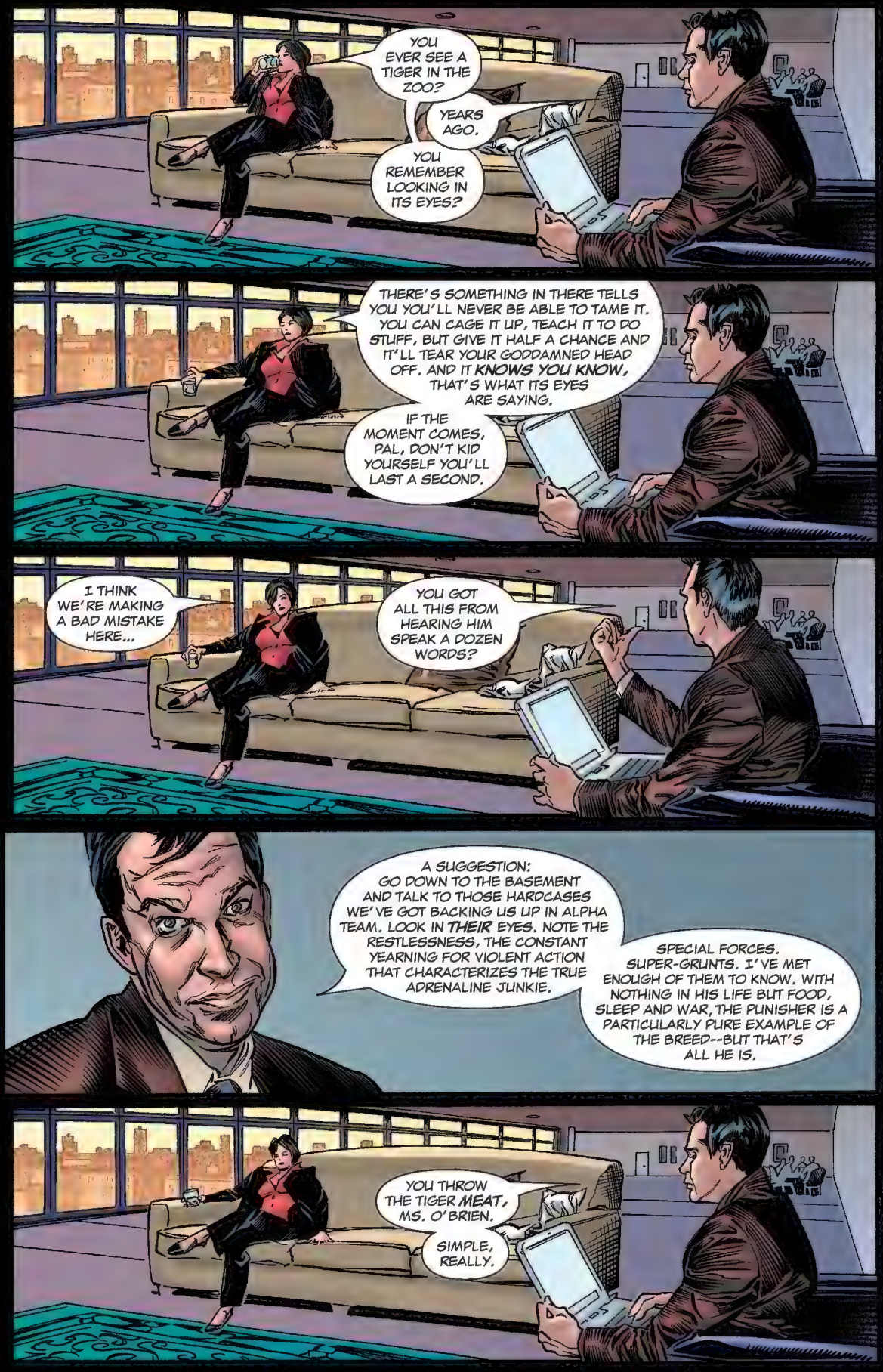
YOU HEARD HIS VOICE?
...YEAH.
EVERYTHING YOU HOPED FOR, I IMAGINE.
IS THERE A MINIBAR IN HERE?
NEXT TO THE STEREO. YOU NEED THE KEY.
WELL, CAN YOU GIVE IT TO ME BEFORE I SHOOT THE LOCK OFF THE FUCKING THING?
JESUS CHRIST.

YES...?
WALTER KRAUSE?
YES...
MISTER KRAUSE, MY NAME IS WILLIAM ROTH, I NEED TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS. PLEASE TAKE THE CHAIN OFF THE DOOR AND STAND ASIDE.
UM...
COME ON, MISTER KRAUSE, I HAVEN'T GOT ALL DAY HERE. THE CHAIN.
I DIDN'T GET A REAL GOOD LOOK AT THAT, THAT CARD OF YOURS...
YOU CAN CHECK MY IDENTIFICATION INSIDE. MISTER KRAUSE, THIS IS A SERIOUS--
ARE THESE GENTLEMEN WITH YOU TOO...?
WHAT?

HEY--!
HEY, HOW YOU DOIN' THERE? THIS GUY'S JUST LEAVIN', HE AIN'T GONNA BOTHER YOU NO MORE.
OH...
BUT HE... UM...
S'OKAY, WE'LL HANDLE IT FROM HERE. WHYN'T YOU GO BACK INSIDE AN' SHUT YOUR DOOR, OKAY?
LISTEN, ASSHOLES, YOU KNOW WHO IT IS YOU'RE FUCKING WUUUGGHH
OH-- GOD--
THERE YOU GO, HAVE SOME DINNER OR SOMETHIN' ON ME. SORRY TO HAVE TROUBLED YOU.
UM... OKAY...
OKAY, LEMME SEE HERE.
ROTH, WILLIAM PETER. CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.
SO YEAH, I GUESS WE DO KNOW WHO IT IS WE'RE FUCKIN' WITH.

THE OLD GUY?
NAH, LEAVE HIM. POOR OLD PRICK PROBABLY FOUGHT IN A WAR OR SOMETHIN'.
BESIDES, I THINK THIS BLACK OPS-MOTHERFUCKER'S GONNA TELL US EVERYTHING WE NEED TO KNOW...
HUH.
WHO'S THIS?
GENUINE FUCKIN' C.I.A. ASSASSIN. COCKSUCKER WAS GONNA WHACK THAT OLD GUY.
NO I WASN'T--!
THE GUY FROM THE T.V. NEWS? WHAT WAS HE, LIKE NINETY?
JESUS, I THOUGHT WE WERE BAD...
TELL ME ABOUT IT. I GOT A GOOD MIND TO LEAVE THIS ASSHOLE CHOPPED UP INNA TRUNKA HIS SPOOKMOBILE.


WHAT'S STOPPIN' YA?
GUY'S A FUCK. YA ONLY GOTTA LOOK AT HIM.
BUT-- BUT--BUT--
NOT LOOKIN' TOO GOOD FOR YOU, IS IT, HOSS?
WELL, LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN DO TO IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES.
WE'RE GONNA GO FOR A NICE SLOW DRIVE AROUND THE BLOCK. INNA TIME IT TAKES US TO DO THAT, YOU'RE GONNA TELL US EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT THE CREW TOOK DOWN THE PUNISHER.
YOU'RE GONNA TELL US WHERE YOU GOT HIM, AN' WHO ELSE IS THERE WITH HIM, AN' HOW MANY GUNS YOU GOT BACKIN' YOU UP. AN' YOU'RE GONNA GIVE US THE LAYOUT A' THE PLACE, AN' HOW WE GET IN AN' OUT. YOU CAN EVEN TELL US WHAT THE FUCK YOU'RE DOIN' WITH THE BASTARD.
THEN WE'LL SEE.
LET'S GO, LARRY.
AN' DON'T GO GETTIN' FUCKIN' CUTE, NEITHER.
OR I'LL CUT YA BALLS OFF AN' PUT 'EM IN A PAPER CUP.


YOU EVER SEE A TIGER IN THE ZOO?
YEARS AGO.
YOU REMEMBER LOOKING IN ITS EYES?
THERE'S SOMETHING IN THERE TELLS YOU YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO TAME IT. YOU CAN CAGE IT UP, TEACH IT TO DO STUFF, BUT GIVE IT HALF A CHANCE AND IT'LL TEAR YOUR GODDAMNED HEAD OFF. AND IT KNOWS YOU KNOW, THAT'S WHAT ITS EYES ARE SAYING.
IF THE MOMENT COMES, PAL, DON'T KID YOURSELF YOU'LL LAST A SECOND.
I THINK WE'RE MAKING A BAD MISTAKE HERE...
YOU GOT ALL THIS FROM HEARING HIM SPEAK A DOZEN WORDS?
A SUGGESTION: GO DOWN TO THE BASEMENT AND TALK TO THOSE HARDCASES WE'VE GOT BACKING US UP IN ALPHA TEAM. LOOK IN THEIR EYES. NOTE THE RESTLESSNESS, THE CONSTANT YEARNING FOR VIOLENT ACTION THAT CHARACTERIZES THE TRUE ADRENALINE JUNKIE.
SPECIAL FORCES. SUPER-GRUNTS. I'VE MET ENOUGH OF THEM TO KNOW. WITH NOTHING IN HIS LIFE BUT FOOD, SLEEP AND WAR, THE PUNISHER IS A PARTICULARLY PURE EXAMPLE OF THE BREED--BUT THAT'S ALL HE IS.
YOU THROW THE TIGER MEAT, MS. O'BRIEN.
SIMPLE, REALLY.

I DON'T--
EXCUSE ME: HAS THERE BEEN ANY WORD FROM MISTER ROTH YET?
AH, NO SIR, MISTER BETHELL. HE'S OVERDUE AS OF FOUR MINUTES AGO.
THAT'S SOMETHING FOR YOU TO DO. HEAD OVER TO BROOKLYN, SEE IF YOU CAN FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ROTH.
PROBABLY JUST HIS CELL, BUT BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY, DON'T YOU THINK?
SURE. GIVE ME THE TICKET AND I'LL PICK UP YOUR DRY-CLEANING ON MY WAY BACK IN.
AH...?
WHAT YOU'VE GOT IN THAT ROOM IS NOT TO BE FUCKED WITH.
I'M GOING TO TAKE MY SHOT NOW, FRANK.
YOU HEAR ME OUT AND SAY YES OR FUCK YOU.

I THINK YOU'RE STILL A HUMAN BEING.
YOU'RE NOT INSANE. IF YOU WERE, YOU'D HAVE WALKED INTO A MCDONALD'S WITH AN ARMALITE BY NOW.
YOU'RE NOT A DAHMER OR A GACY IN THE MAKING. YOU TAKE NO PLEASURE IN WHAT YOU DO; TAKE NO PLEASURE IN ANYTHING THAT I CAN SEE.
AND YOU FEEL. SHOWING YOU THOSE PICTURES WAS NOT SOMETHING I DID LIGHTLY.
THAT'S WHY I THINK YOU'LL LISTEN TO ME, FRANK:
WHEN I OFFER YOU A WAY TO LEAVE THE PUNISHER BEHIND FOREVER.

PUNISHER #4

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO HUNT BIN LADEN?
I'M SERIOUS.
FORGET ABOUT THE SMALL FRY. FORGET THE MAFIA. NO ONE CARES ABOUT A BUNCH OF FAT ITALIANS AND THEIR TWO DOZEN MURDERS A YEAR.
I'M TALKING ABOUT GOING AFTER SOME REAL MONSTERS.
THE ONES WHO KILL THOUSANDS. THE ONES WHO DO IT AT A DISTANCE, TRAINING FANATICS AND CUTTING THEM LOOSE TO KILL AND MAIM AND DEVASTATE.
GO OUT INTO THE WORLD AND GET THEM, FRANK. DO IT FOR YOUR COUNTRY. FOR CIVILIZATION ITSELF. WITH THE FULL BACKING AND SUPPORT OF YOUR GOVERNMENT.
COMBINE THE RESOURCES OF THE U.S. MILITARY WITH THIS THING YOU'VE CREATED--AND UNLEASH IT ON THE TRULY DESERVING.
HUNT THEM. KILL THEM. DISAPPEAR.
TERRORIZE THEM.
WHO KNOWS...

MAYBE IT'S WHAT YOU SHOULD HAVE DONE ALL ALONG.
IN THE BEGINNING
PART 4

YOU OKAY, LARRY?
THAT-- UUP--
THAT'S THE MOST FUCKED-UP THING I EVER SEEN...
JUST BEIN' THOROUGH.
NOW WE KNOW WHERE THEY ARE, THEY GOT THE PENTHOUSE SUITE INNA HOTEL CLAUDE. WE KNOW HOW THEY COME AN' GO--WE GOT THAT DOUCHEBAG'S SWIPECARD, WE CAN GET IN ANY TIME WE WANT. WE EVEN KNOW THEY GOT A DOZEN COMMANDO ASSHOLES BACKIN' THEM UP.
WE GOT EVERYTHING WE NEED TO GET OUR HANDS ON THE PUNISHER...
WAIT-- JESUS--
TAKE YOUR TIME.

I KNEW THIS PRICK WAS A FUCK.
HUH.
EASY, PITTSY. INK.
GOTTA BE THOROUGH, LARRY. GOTTA DO THINGS RIGHT.
THAT'S HOW YOU LOSE YOUR GRIP, WHEN YOU THINK YOU CAN RELAX AN' JUST DO A HALF-ASSED JOB INSTEAD.
ALWAYS SOMEONE READY TO STEP IN AN' TAKE OVER. THAT'S HOW WE ENDED UP WHERE WE ARE.
THINK ABOUT IT. THE IRISH USED TO RUN EVERYTHING IN THIS COUNTRY, 'TIL THEY SELF-DESTRUCTED ON BOOZE AN' COKE. THEY FUCKED UP AN' WE WERE RIGHT HERE WAITIN' TO STEP IN.
AN' THAT'S HOW WE'RE GONNA LOSE EVERYTHING TOO, TO THE BLACKS OR THE FUCKIN' RUSSIANS, BECAUSE NO ONE'S GOT THE BALLS TO BE THOROUGH AN' DO THE SHIT ME AN' PITTSY AN INK DO...
NICKY, DON'T--
WHATSA MATTER NOW?
DON'T SAY BALLS--
JESUS FUCKIN' CHRIST, LARRY.
GONNA HAVETA TOUGHEN YOU UP.

BETHELL AND HIS TEAM ARE C.I.A.
HIS REMIT--ONCE YOU STRIP AWAY THE FANCY LANGUAGE--IS ASSASSINATION. HE WANTS KILLERS, FOR EXACTLY THE KIND OF TARGETS I'VE DESCRIBED.
TROUBLE IS, HE HAS NEITHER THE FUNDING NOR THE LEGAL ROOM TO MANEUVER TO GET WHAT HE NEEDS. RECRUITING ANYWHERE OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES WILL RUN HIM SMACK INTO A SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE.
WHICH IS A PROBLEM, BECAUSE BETHELL NEEDS PEOPLE WHO DON'T FUCK UP.
YOU'D HAVE NO CONTACT WHATSOEVER WITH OFFICIALDOM. NO MORE THAN A DOZEN PEOPLE WOULD EVEN KNOW YOU EXIST. I'D BE YOUR GO-BETWEEN WITH BETHELL, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO TALK TO HIM--BELIEVE ME, THAT WOULD BE IDEAL FOR YOU BOTH.
ONCE YOU WERE ASSIGNED YOUR TARGET, YOU'D HAVE ACCESS TO WHATEVER INTEL AND MUNITIONS YOU REQUIRED. YOU'D PLAN EACH OP YOURSELF, NO RED TAPE OR OTHER BULLSHIT TO DEAL WITH. DEPLOYMENT, TIMING, ACQUISITION AND EXTRACTION--EVERYTHING DONE THE WAY YOU WANT IT.
THAT'S THE ONLY WAY YOU WORK: I MADE THAT CLEAR.
IT'S THE COMPANY, FRANK.
THEY CAN GET YOU IN ANYWHERE.

THERE'S AN N.Y.P.D. PRESS RELEASE ALREADY WRITTEN, SAYS THE PUNISHER KILLED HIMSELF IN CUSTODY. BY THE TIME THE NEWS BREAKS WE'LL BE FAR AWAY FROM HERE, GETTING READY TO BEGIN.
IF YOU WANTED, I COULD HANDLE SURVEILLANCE AND INTELLIGENCE INTERPRETATION-- WEAPONS PREP TOO, IF YOU NEED A QUARTERMASTER. THE RESOURCES THESE GUYS HAVE MAKE OUR OLD OPERATION LOOK PREHISTORIC.
BE JUST LIKE IT USED TO BE, EXCEPT WE'D BE DOING SOMETHING GOOD.
WHAT DO YOU SAY?
YES OR FUCK YOU?
YEAH.
FUCK YOU.

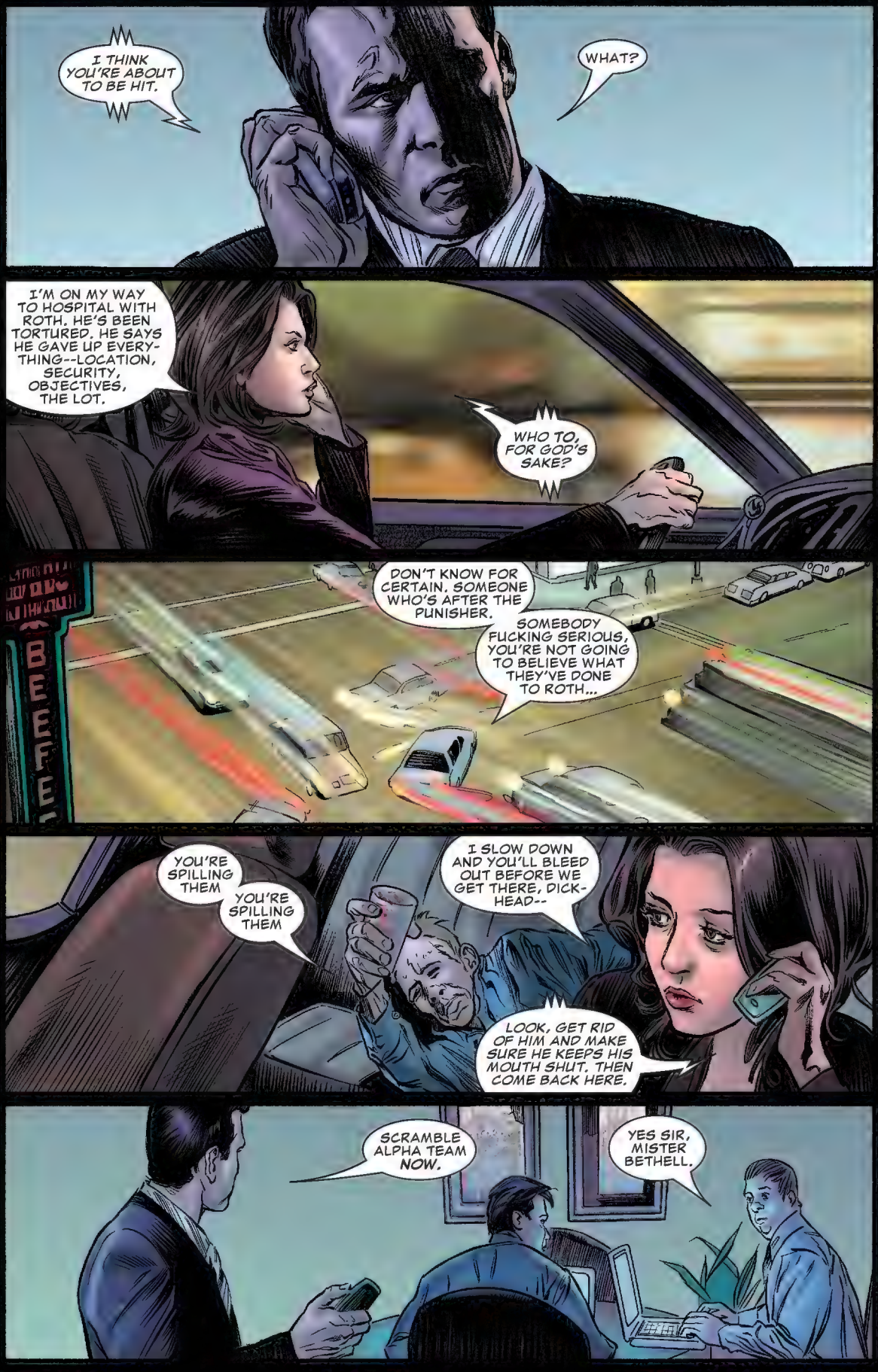
A THOUSAND BUCKS A NIGHT? WHAT DO THEY DO, SEND UP A HOOKER TO TONGUE YOUR ASSHOLE?
HOTEL CLAUDE
THIS FUCKIN' PLACE...
SURE, LARRY, THIS FUCKIN' PLACE. MIND ONNA JOB HERE, OKAY?
SO THEY GOT THIS SPECIAL FORCES CREW INNA BASEMENT, THAT'S THEIR BACK-UP. THOSE BASTARDS GET INVOLVED AN' WE'RE GONNA HAVE A SERIOUS PROBLEM...
HOMOS.
WELL, JUST IN CASE THEY AIN'T, PITTS.
INK, TAKE YOUR TOOL KIT AN' FIND THE SERVICE ELEVATOR, THAT'S WHAT THEY USE TO COME IN AN' OUT WITHOUT GETTIN' SEEN. CALL ME WHEN YOU'RE DONE, OKAY?
HUH.
THEN COME HOOK UP WITH US ONNA PENTHOUSE LEVEL. SHOULDN'T TAKE YOU MORE'N A HALF HOUR.
HOTEL STAFF'RE BEIN' PAID TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY--I'M HOPIN' THAT'LL WORK FOR US, TOO, AT LEAST 'TIL THE SHOOTIN' STARTS. AFTER THAT WE GOTTA MOVE LIKE WHITE FUCKIN' LIGHTNIN'.
EVERYBODY HAPPY?
LET'S GO WHACK THE PUNISHER.

WHY?
I DON'T WORK FOR OR WITH ANY-ONE.
EVENTUALLY THEY LET YOU DOWN.
I HAD TO GIVE IT UP, I TOLD YOU WHY--
YOU, I COULD CARE LESS ABOUT.
FIGHTING FOR THE PEOPLE WHO RUN THE WORLD GETS YOU STABBED IN THE BACK.
YOU FIGHT THE WARS THEY START AND FEED. YOU KILL THE MONSTERS THEY CREATE. YOU DIE FROM HANDLING DEPLETED URANIUM WHILE THEY GET RICH ON OIL.
I'M NOT GOING BACK TO WAR SO COLT CAN SELL ANOTHER MILLION M-16S.
I HAD ENOUGH OF THAT IN VIETNAM.

THAT'S NOT THE WAY IT IS...!
THERE ARE SIXTY THOUSAND GUYS IN D.C. WHO'D SAY DIFFERENT.
EXCEPT THEY CAN'T SAY ANYTHING, BECAUSE THEY'RE NOTHING BUT NAMES ON A BLACK WALL.
FRANK--
BETHELL WILL HAVE YOU *KILLED*...
OH, SHIT.

OH YES, UM... THAT'S HIM, ALL RIGHT...
WHAT'D THEY LOOK LIKE? THESE MEN WHO TOOK HIM AWAY?
WELL, THERE WAS...A TALL ONE... AND A SHORT ONE... AND, AND A THIN ONE...
THAT'S OUTSTANDING, MISTER KRAUSE.
I SAW THEM OUT MY WINDOW... THEY PUT HIM IN THEIR CAR AND THEY DROVE OFF, AND...
NO...AND THEN THEY CAME BACK, UMM, THAT'S RIGHT, THEY MUST'VE DRIVEN ROUND THE BLOCK...BUT THIS TIME HE WASN'T WITH THEM...
O
DO YOU THINK, UM...THEY WERE GIVING HIM A RIDE SOME-WHERE...?
STARTING TO LOOK THAT WAY, ISN'T IT?
OKAY--
O
O'BRIEN.

HELP MEEEEEEE...!
HOLY SHIT.
OH, DEAR...

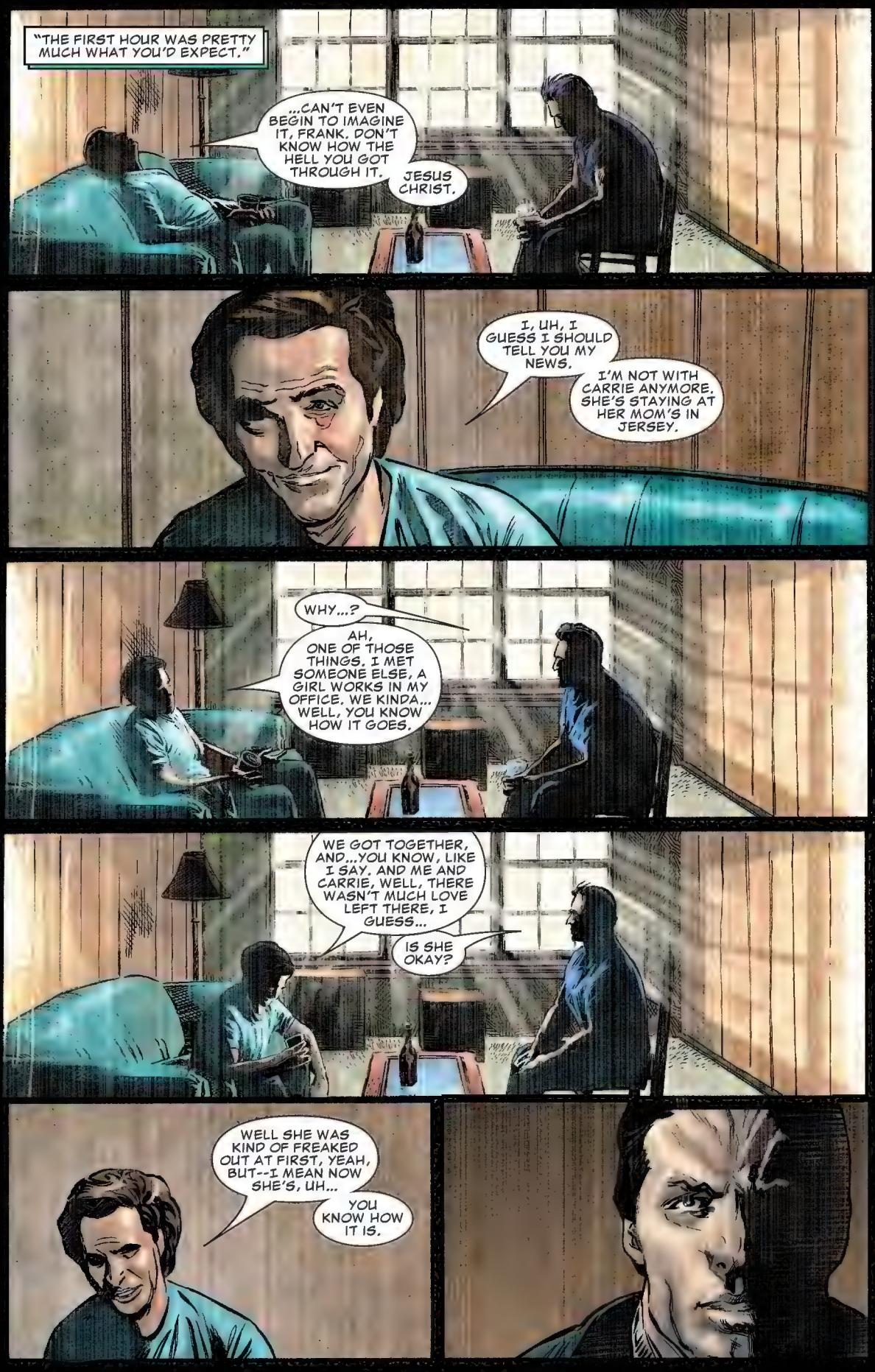

I THINK YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE HIT.
WHAT?
I'M ON MY WAY TO HOSPITAL WITH ROTH. HE'S BEEN TORTURED. HE SAYS HE GAVE UP EVERY-THING--LOCATION, SECURITY, OBJECTIVES, THE LOT.
WHO TO, FOR GOD'S SAKE?
DON'T KNOW FOR CERTAIN. SOMEONE WHO'S AFTER THE PUNISHER.
SOMEBODY FUCKING SERIOUS, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE WHAT THEY'VE DONE TO ROTH...
YOU'RE SPILLING THEM
YOU'RE SPILLING THEM
I SLOW DOWN AND YOU'LL BLEED OUT BEFORE WE GET THERE, DICK-HEAD--
LOOK, GET RID OF HIM AND MAKE SURE HE KEEPS HIS MOUTH SHUT. THEN COME BACK HERE.
SCRAMBLE ALPHA TEAM NOW.
YES SIR, MISTER BETHELL.

STANDARD DEPLOYMENT THE INSTANT THE DOORS OPEN! CHECK ALL ACCESS POINTS, I DON'T CARE WHAT FLOOR WE'RE ON! MOVE!
...YEAH? OKAY. OKAY, DO WHAT YOU CAN.
FUCK YOU LOOKIN' AT, JUMBO?
INK THINKS THEY'RE COMIN' UP.
SAYS HE DON'T THINK HE'S GONNA MAKE IT IN TIME.
EVERY-ONE GOOD TO GO?
47
YO!!

HUH?
FUCK!!
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!

STOP THE FUCKIN' THING! HIT THE EMERGENCY BUTTON!
IT AIN'T FUCKIN' WORKIN'!
FUCK! FUCK!!
HEEEELLLP!
INK SAYS WE'RE GONNA BE FINE.
THANK CHRIST.

BOB GARRETT.
WHO...?
USED TO BE A NEIGHBOR OF MINE. HAD THE PLACE NEXT DOOR TO ME AND MARIA.
AVERAGE GUY. RAN HIS OWN BUSINESS. MARRIED, NO KIDS.
AFTER CENTRAL PARK, I DIDN'T TALK TO ANYONE FOR A LONG TIME.
HAVEN'T SEEN YOU AROUND IN A WHILE, FRANK.
THOUGHT I MIGHT BUY YOU A DRINK.
YOU MOVING OUT?
I DON'T KNOW YET.
JUST... GETTING THEIR THINGS TOGETHER.


"THE FIRST HOUR WAS PRETTY MUCH WHAT YOU'D EXPECT."
...CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO IMAGINE IT, FRANK. DON'T KNOW HOW THE HELL YOU GOT THROUGH IT.
JESUS CHRIST.
I, UH, I GUESS I SHOULD TELL YOU MY NEWS.
I'M NOT WITH CARRIE ANYMORE. SHE'S STAYING AT HER MOM'S IN JERSEY.
WHY...?
AH, ONE OF THOSE THINGS. I MET SOMEONE ELSE, A GIRL WORKS IN MY OFFICE. WE KINDA... WELL, YOU KNOW HOW IT GOES.
WE GOT TOGETHER, AND...YOU KNOW, LIKE I SAY. AND ME AND CARRIE, WELL, THERE WASN'T MUCH LOVE LEFT THERE, I GUESS...
IS SHE OKAY?
WELL SHE WAS KIND OF FREAKED OUT AT FIRST, YEAH, BUT--I MEAN NOW SHE'S, UH...
YOU KNOW HOW IT IS.

FRANK?
I LOST MY WIFE.
AND YOU THREW YOURS AWAY LIKE SHE WAS NOTHING.
HEY, FRANK, LOOK--
RUN.
WHAT'D YOU SAY?
WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS?

IN HIS HEART, HE KNEW IT WAS WRONG. BUT IT WAS WHAT HE WANTED.
SO HE WENT AHEAD AND DID IT, AND HOPED EVERY-THING WOULD WORK OUT ALL RIGHT.
"THAT'S WHY HE DESERVED TO BE PUNISHED."
FRANK, WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME--
WHERE DOES BETHELL'S FUNDING COME FROM?
WHAT?

READY?
FUCKIN' A.
YE--
NONE A' YOU COCK-SUCKERS FUCKIN' MOVE!!
WHAT WAS THAT--?
SOUNDS LIKE TROUBLE.
WHERE DOES HE GET THE FUNDING?

WHERE THE HELL ARE ALPHA TEAM...?
YOU BETHELL?
UH?
ARE YOU BETHELL?
YES--
GOT A WEAPON IN HERE?
IN THE SAME ROOM AS YOU? DON'T BE SO FUCKING STUPID!
AAAAAAHH...!
ANY OF 'EM EVEN TWITCH, LARRY, DON'T YOU HESITATE FOR A GODDAMN SECOND.
GO, PITTS.
SHIT--

SHIT'S THE WORD, FAT BOY.
SHIT'S THE FUCKIN' WORD.

PUNISHER #5

WHO THE FUHH
I DON'T BELIEVE IN FUCKIN' AROUND.
GO TO HELL WHERE YOU BELONG, YOU COCK-SUCKER.
BE A LOTTA OUR PEOPLE WAITIN' THERE TO MEET YOU.

IN THE BEGINNING

PART 5

AAAAH, YOU MOTHERFUCKER! JESUS!
FUCKIN' FUCK--
EVERYBODY FREEZE!
OH JESUS--
O'BRIEN, HELP!

OFF ME, YOU AAAAAAHH!
PITTSY! INK! FUCK--!
LITTLE FUCKIN' CUNT--
HUH.
HANG-- ON--
SOMEBODY FUCKIN' GET HER!!
HUH.

OH GOD, OH JESUS, OH CHRIST, OH GOD--
WHAT THE FUCK IS HAPPENING--?
GO ON, INK, GET THE BITCH! GET HER!
HUH.

PITTSY!
PITTSY, FINISH HER! DO IT AN' LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!
COCK... SUCKER...!
FRANK--
YOU'RE FREE--
WHAT?

UNNNH!
HNNFF!
AAAAHHH!!
FUCK YOU!!

NO CLEAR SHOT--
SHOOT HIM.
BUT--
SHOOT HIM.
GIMME THAT, YOU FUCKIN' FAGGOT!
BUT-- BUT-- BUT--

LET'S GO, PITTSY!
THAT FUCK! THAT FUCKIN' FUCK!!
WE'RE GONNA HAVE HALF THE P.D. UP OUR ASSES! GO!!
YOU TOO, ASSHOLE--
COCKSUCKER!
CHRIST--

FRANK, WAIT--
COPS ARE COMING.
I NEED A PARAMEDIC--!
AAAAH, FRANK!!
JESUS CHRIST.
I AM SO FUCKING WET RIGHT NOW.

SLOW DOWN, YOU PRICK. YOU'RE GONNA MAKE 'EM SUSPICIOUS.
NICKY, I'M SORRY-- BACK THERE, IT WAS JUST SO--
SHUT UP.
YOU'RE A STUPID, USELESS COCKSUCKER, LARRY. I DON'T WANNA HEAR WORD ONE OUTTA YOU.
HOW YOU DOIN', PITTS?
I WANNANOTHER SHOT AT THAT FUCK, THAT'S HOW THE FUCK I'M DOIN'!
LARRY, PULL OVER AT THE ENDA THE NEXT BLOCK. CALL A DOCTOR.
I DON'T NEED A MOTHERFUCKIN' DOCTOR!!
THEN CALL YOUR PEOPLE. GET AS MANY GUNS MOBILIZED AS POSSIBLE AN' HAVE 'EM MEET US AT YOUR PLACE, UNDERSTAND?
YOU UNDERSTAND ME, LARRY?
YOU CAN TALK NOW, YOU DUMB LITTLE SHIT...

ONE GO THROUGH?
YEAH.
BAD?
YEAH.
TWO MORE BLOCKS, GREEN DOOR. CODE IS ONE-NINE-FIVE-NINE-ZERO.
WHEN'D YOU SET THIS UP?
NINETY-SIX, JUST BEFORE I LEFT TOWN. THERE'S TWO MORE LIKE IT IN QUEENS AND THE BRONX.
YOU REMEMBER BILLY GABRESKI?
YOU MADE AN IMPRESSION ON HIM, BELIEVE ME. ONE NIGHT'S WORK, ELEVEN DEAD POLACKS, FOUR TRUCKLOADS OF STOLEN M-16's.
YOU TOLD ME TO STASH THEM SOMEWHERE SAFE.
JUST FULL OF SURPRISES, AREN'T YOU?

WEAPONS SHOULD BE OKAY, I LOADED THE CRATES WITH DEHUMIDIFIER. SMALL STOCK OF CANNED FOOD TOO, JUST IN CASE.
HOPE YOU REMEMBERED A FIRST-AID KIT.
BECAUSE OTHERWISE YOU'RE FUCKED.
I KNOW YOU'RE PISSED.
YOU WANT ANSWERS, OR YOU'D JUST HAVE LEFT ME THERE TO ROT.
WHERE DOES BETHELL GET HIS FUNDING, RIGHT? IF IT'S AN ILLEGAL OPERATION?
SEE, I KNOW YOU, FRANK. SOMETHING'S BADLY WRONG HERE, YOU CAN TELL, THE KIND OF THING YOU NEVER WALK AWAY FROM.
SO I'M GOING TO TELL YOU ALL OF IT.
I KNOW YOU ARE.

I DON'T CARE WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE, I ASSURE YOU IT IS NOT A CRIME SCENE.
IT ISN'T?
HOMELAND SECURITY. TALK TO YOUR COMMISSIONER.
BUT SIR--
HOMELAND SECURITY...
SIR, HOMELAND SECURITY OR NOT, YOU HAVE A BAD FLESH WOUND TO YOUR LOWER LEFT THIGH AND YOUR RIGHT KNEECAP IS COMPLETELY SHATTERED...
PERCOCET.
SIR, WE HAVE TO GET THIS WOMAN OUT OF HERE, WE HAVE TO DO IT NOW--
MA'AM--!
FUCK IT. BETHELL, ARE WE THROUGH HERE, OR DO I HAVE TO BLEED OUT WITH YOU PISSING AND MOANING IN MY EAR?
IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I NEED TO KNOW?

NO, THAT'S IT. ROTH GOT HIS BALLS CUT OFF BY THREE GUYS HE SAYS WERE MOBBED UP. I GOT BACK IN TIME TO STOP THEM DOING THE SAME TO YOU.
AND I QUIT, YOU FUCKING UNGRATEFUL COCKSUCKER...
I MAY HAVE SUCKED A COCK OR TWO IN MY TIME, O'BRIEN, BUT IT'S NOTHING TO THE BOTTOMLESS PIT OF PUSSY YOU'LL BE EATING WHEN THEY THROW YOU BACK IN PRISON.
GET THIS STUPID BITCH OUT OF MY SIGHT.
MORE PUSSY THAN YOU'LL EVER SEE, PISSANT!
AAAAH!
BE CAREFUL, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!
ARCHER? BETHELL. TWO THINGS: ACTIVATE THE BUG IN MICRO'S CELLPHONE AND HAVE A GUNSHIP MEET ME AT LA GUARDIA IN HALF AN HOUR.
NO, A GUNSHIP...
YES, YOU'D LIKE THAT, WOULDN'T YOU?
DON'T GET TOO USED TO THE THE VIEW FROM MY DESK, ARCHER. THINGS ARE GOING GOOD UP HERE. THINGS ARE GOING GREAT.
AS A MATTER OF FACT, I'M ONLY JUST GETTING STARTED...

BETHELL ISN'T QUITE THE YUPPIE PRICK HE SEEMS TO BE.
WELL, HE IS, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT HE IS. BUT THERE'S A LITTLE MORE TO HIM AS WELL.
COMPANY, THROUGH AND THROUGH, OF COURSE. HE WAS ATTACHED TO A GREY FOX TEAM IN AFGHANISTAN--WHEN KABUL FELL, HE WAS IN THE MOUNTAINS HUNTING MUJAHADEEN.
HE WAS HOPING TO DO A LITTLE BUSINESS.
THINKING... WHAT EVERYONE WAS THINKING WHEN THEY OPENED UP AFGHANISTAN.
HEROIN.
IT'S LIKE I TOLD YOU, HE DIDN'T HAVE THE BUDGET TO DO THE JOB HE WAS ASSIGNED. HE NEEDED MONEY THAT COULD NEVER BE TRACED, TO PAY FOR KILLERS THAT COULD NEVER BE ACKNOWLEDGED.
THE SMACK COMES IN PACKED IN BODYBAGS ALONG WITH DEAD GIs.
BETHELL HAS CONTACTS IN POLICE DEPARTMENTS ON THE WEST COAST, FROM SAN DIEGO TO SEATTLE. THEY SELL THE STUFF TO STREET GANGS.
HIS CUT COULD PAY FOR HALF THE NORMANDY INVASION.

AND FOR YOU.
YEAH.
HE FOUND ME ON-LINE. PEOPLE DO, FROM TIME TO TIME.
GUYS WRITING SHITTY BOOKS ABOUT THE PUNISHER, FEDS TRYING TO NAIL ME ONCE AND FOR ALL, THEY DROP A LITTLE BAIT IN THE WATER, WAIT TO REEL ME IN--IT DOESN'T OCCUR TO THEM I'M NEVER GOING TO BITE.
BETHELL WAS DIFFERENT. HE WANTED *YOU*--TO USE YOU, HE SAID, TO MAYBE DO SOME GOOD IN THE WORLD.
I...
I THOUGHT IT MIGHT JUST BE A CHANCE TO SAVE YOU.
YOU REALIZE WHAT IT IS YOU'VE DONE?
YOU TAKE MONEY FROM THE MOB, FRANK. YOU BUY ORDNANCE, IMPROVE YOUR OPERATION.
PEOPLE WILL ALWAYS WANT NARCOTICS. NOTHING YOU, NOR I, NOR ANY GOVERNMENT IN THE WORLD CAN DO WILL EVER CHANGE THAT.
AT LEAST...*THIS* WAY...
THE VERMIN I TAKE MONEY FROM I KILL.
YOU'VE JOINED THE ENEMY, MICRO.

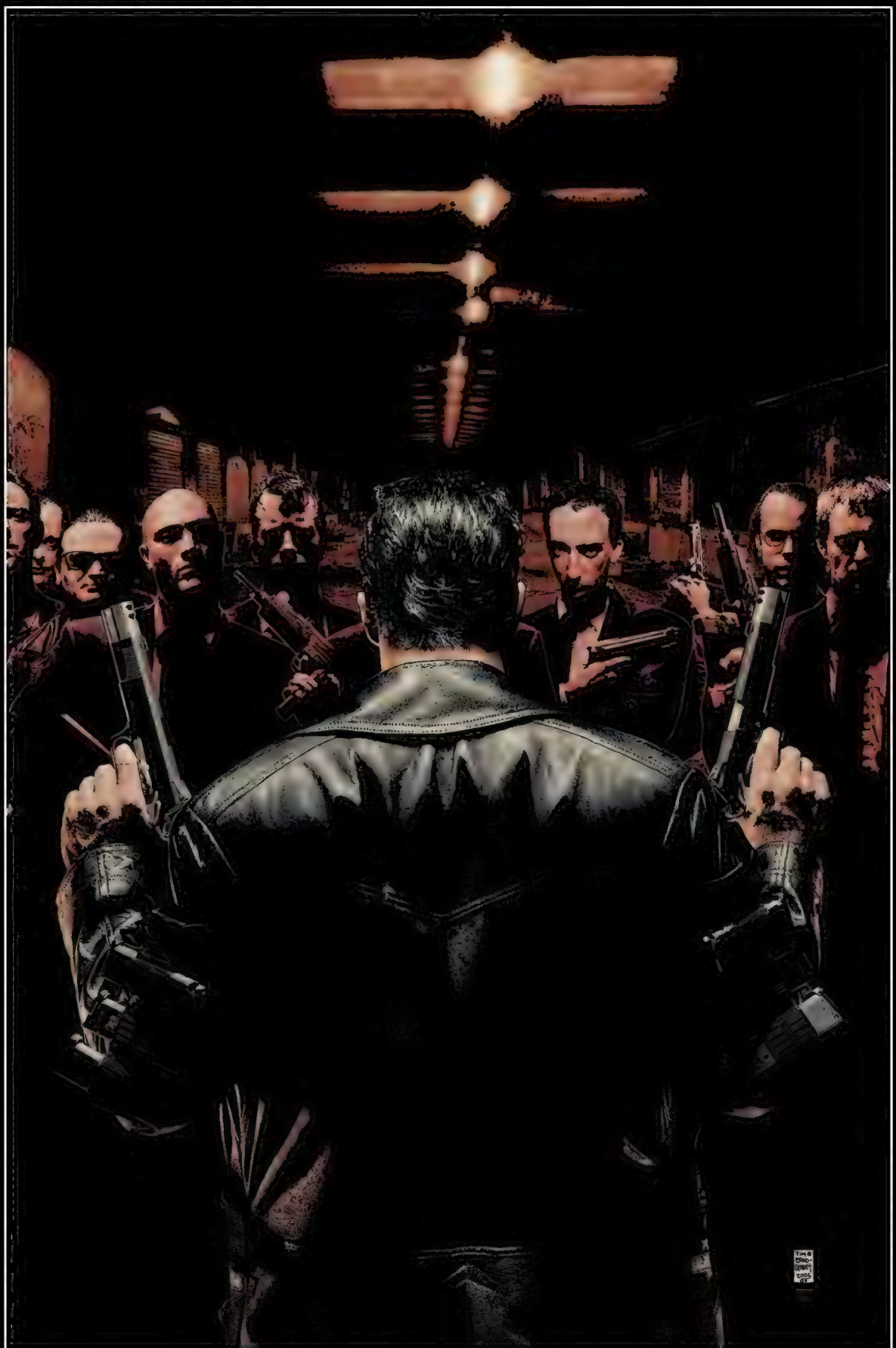
I WANT TO KNOW WHY YOU TOLD ME ABOUT BOB GARRETT.
THE GUY WHO DUMPED HIS WIFE AND YOU BEAT HALF TO DEATH.
YOU MISSED PART OF IT. I WARNED HIM FIRST.
I TOLD HIM TO RUN BECAUSE I KNEW WHAT I WAS GOING TO DO TO HIM.
BUT WHY TELL ME...?
GIVE ME YOUR CELL-PHONE.
BUT--
NOW.

HOW THE FUCK DID YOU GET THIS NUMBER...?
RECOGNIZED LARRY BARUCCI PISSING HIS PANTS ON THE FLOOR BACK THERE. GOT THE NUMBER LAST YEAR WHEN I BUGGED HIS HOUSE.
FUCKIN' JESUS FUCK--!
YOU KNOW WHO I AM, YOU SON OF A BITCH?
JUST ANOTHER GUINEA PIMP, BY THE LOOK OF YOU.
I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU A LOCATION IN BROOKLYN. YOU GATHER ALL THE SCUM YOU CAN AND COME AND FIND ME, IT'S TIME I PUT AN END TO YOU.
UN-FUCKIN'-BELIEVABLE.
LARRY, GET ME A PEN AN' SOMETHIN' TO WRITE ON. I'M GONNA KILL THIS MOTHERLESS FUCK BY INCHES.

YOU DIDN'T KNOW?
NO. NO. OH, THAT PIECE OF SHIT...!
GODDAMMIT, HE'LL BE ON HIS WAY RIGHT NOW...
WORKS FOR ME.
YOU WANT TO GO TO WAR WITH THE CIA?
FRANK, ARE YOU--
RUN.
YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS I'M TELLING YOU?

IT...IT'D BE YOU ON YOUR OWN AGAINST DOZENS OF THEM.
I CAN'T GO.
DON'T BE STUPID.
DON'T THINK YOU CAN CHANGE ANYTHING, REDEEM ANYTHING. DON'T THINK THE PAST MEANS SHIT TO ME.
RUN.
NO.
THEN ON YOUR OWN HEAD BE IT.
HERE THEY COME.

PUNISHER #6



THIS ENDS LIKE IT STARTED.
IN BLOOD.
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHH!!!
IN THE BEGINNING
CONCLUSION

THEY CALL THEMSELVES SOLDIERS.
THEY CALL IT THE LIFE.
BUT MOST WISE GUYS ARE CANNON-FODDER.
RELOADING.
RIGHT.
EVEN THEIR BOSSES AREN'T MUCH BRIGHTER. NO IMAGINATION. NO REAL THREAT.
IT'S THE ONE IN A THOUSAND WHO'S GOT IT TOGETHER-- WHO THINKS SOLDIER MEANS SOLDIER--WHO KNOWS IT'S A LIFE--
THERE YOU ARE, YOU MOTHERFUCKER...
HE'S THE ONE YOU HAVE TO WATCH.
TRACE SIGNAL STILL CLEAR, SIR--
DON'T NEED IT! SOMEONE'S SHOOTING, THREE O'CLOCK!
TELL THE POLICE THEY ARE NOT TO INTERFERE! ESTABLISH A PERIMETER AND HOLD, THEY ARE TO LEAVE THE REST TO US!
YES SIR.
AH, THIS IS GUNDOG, THIS IS GUNDOG, TRANSMITTING CODE GREEN SEVEN--

JESUS, NICKY, HE'S KILLIN' ALL OUR GUYS...!
GET READY TO SEND THE NEXT TWO CARS.
YOU SURE?
SON OF A BITCH IS EX-MILITARY. PICKED HIMSELF A PLACE HE CAN TURN INTO A PERFECT KILL-ZONE.
PROBABLY GOT HIS FAT FUCK PARTNER WATCHIN' HIS BACK.
ONLY WAY IN THERE IS UNDER HIS GUNS. HE KILLS OUR GUYS, WE HAVE TO GO IN AFTER HIM, THEN HE KILLS US TOO.
SO STICK TO THE SCRIPT, LARRY. WE DON'T WANT HIM GETTIN' CURIOUS.
NEXT TWO CARS.
COCKSUCKER...

RELOADING.
MICRO?

RRAAAAAHHH!!
YOU FUCK.

THAT'S PITTSY'S SHOTGUN. LET'S TAKE A WALK DOWN THERE OURSELVES.
HUH?
JESUS!
THAT'S THOSE MAFIA SAVAGES! FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, WHY IS HE RISKING HIMSELF--?
PILOT, PREPARE TO STRAFE!
GUNDOG ON GREEN SEVEN, ARE YOU GETTING THIS?
AH, MISTER BETHELL, WE HAVE NO ALITHORIZATION TO DO THAT, SIR. WE ARE NOT WEAPONS-FREE AT THIS TIME.
WEAPONS-FREE?
I'LL GIVE YOU FUCKING WEAPONS-FREE--
WHAT THE HELL IS GOIN' ON...?

THE FUCK'S WIT' THE FUCKIN' FAGGOT MACHINE-GUN?
AH, YOU FUCK--!
THAT'S A RIB GONE.
NOT BROKEN.
GONE.
HE KNOWS IT, TOO.
PULL YOUR COCKSUCKIN' HEART OUT, PRICK--
LITTLE BASTARD MEANS WHAT HE SAYS.
DOING HIS BEST TO GRAB A FISTFUL OF LUNG.
AAAAAAAAAHH!!
HCCHH

HCCHH
HCCHH
HCCHH
LET'S FUCKIN'--
GO, YOU FUCK!!
ASSHOLE'S BEEN EATING HIS SPINACH.
THIS DOESN'T HURT HIM.
I CAN TELL.
ALL HE'S DOING'S SOAKING IT UP--
BIDING HIS TIME--
WAITING FOR ME TO PAUSE FOR BREATH--

THERE YOU GO.
FUCKIN' ASKIN' FOR IT--
FUCKIN' FUCK--
THIS
HE
THIS
THIS
ISN'T
THIS
THIS
ISN'T
GOOD
NO.
THIS ISN'T GOOD.
WATCH HIM.
WATCH HIM.
OH, JESUS...

I NEED A KILLER, CASTLE--
I NEED SOMEONE TO DO THE JOB THEY GAVE ME, AND YOU ARE IT--
AND ANYONE GETS IN THE WAY OF THAT, I WILL FUCKING LIQUIDATE THEM--
WE JUST GOT A GO ON GREEN SEVEN.
UNDERSTOOD.
EXCUSE ME, SIR.
HOMELAND SECURITY.
NOW LEAVING THE LAND OF THIS-NEVER-HAPPENED...

ALL RIGHT, FUCK THIS--

YOU FUCK! YOU PUT ME DOWN!
YOU FUCKIN' MUTT, YOU COCKSUCKER, YOU PUT ME THE FUCK DOWN!!
UNNNHH!!!
AAAH--
YOU--
FFFFUUCKIINNNN

I... NEED...
GOING TO HAVE TO HANG ON A WHILE LONGER.

AH, SHIT!
N-N-N-NICKY--?
PITTSY DIDN'T MAKE IT.
YOU SURE?
I'M SURE. PITTSY'S DEAD AN' WE'RE FUCKED.
JESUS CHRIST, DON'T THESE ASSHOLES A' YOURS KNOW TO KEEP THEIR HEADS DOWN?
ASK A STUPID FUCKIN' QUESTION...
WH-WH-WHAT NOW?
LAST THREE SHELLS I TOOK OFF THE RUNT.
HAVE TO HOPE THESE MAGGOTS LOSE THEIR NERVE.

NOW I GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE.
THEN I COME BACK AN' SHOW THAT BASTARD EXACTLY WHO I AM...
OH JESUS, I TOLD YOU, I FUCKIN' TOLD YOU WHAT THIS GUY WAS LIKE--
HE'S THE PUNISHER, HE KILLS EVERYBODY, I TOLD YOU SO I TOLD YOU SO--
WHAT?
LARRY, A CHILD A' FOUR COULD TELL YOU THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO SAY THAT.
RUN AT HIM.
BUT HE--
YOU MIGHT GET LUCKY. HIS GUN MIGHT JAM.
MINE WON'T.
FUCKIN' RUN AT HIM.
YOU FUCKIN' COCKSUCKER, NICKY CAVELLA!
YOU PRICK! YOU ASSHOLE!
YOU FUCKIN' MOTHERLESS PIECE A' SHIT!!
FUCK--
FUCK--
FUCK--

ALMOST OUT OF SHOTGUN RANGE.
EASY DOES IT.
F
F F FFF
YOU HAVE TO BE FUCKING KIDDING ME.
HIS NEXT STEP'S A REFLEX ACTION.
SO'S THE NEXT ONE.
GOT TO BE.

...SAID ESTABLISH A PERIMETER AND HOLD, OKAY? WE'RE PART OF THE PERIMETER: SO THAT'S WHAT WE DO.
YEAH, BUT THE SHOOTING STOPPED A WHILE BACK--
JESUS!!
TOSS THE PIECE. DO IT SLOW.
THEN GET IN THE CAR WHEN I DO AN' DRIVE TILL I TELL YOU TO STOP.
Officer Laura Miller, N.Y.P.D.
Deceased: gunshot wound to the cranium.
Officer Stephen Gein, N.Y.P.D.
Deceased: gunshot wound to the cranium.
Body recovered at later date.
Nicolas Cavella.
Whereabouts unknown.

Carmine "Pittsy" Gazzera.
Deceased: gunshot wound to the cranium.
Laurence Barrucci.
Deceased: gunshot wound to the thorax.
HEY.
ALL FIXED.
BE IN D.C. IN A COUPLE OF HOURS, START YOUR FIRST MISSION TOMORROW. COPS HERE WON'T HAVE SHIT TO SAY.
HOW'S THAT WORK FOR YOU?
NOTHING WORKS FOR ME.
Robert Bethell, Central Intelligence Agency.
Deceased: internal hemorrhaging.

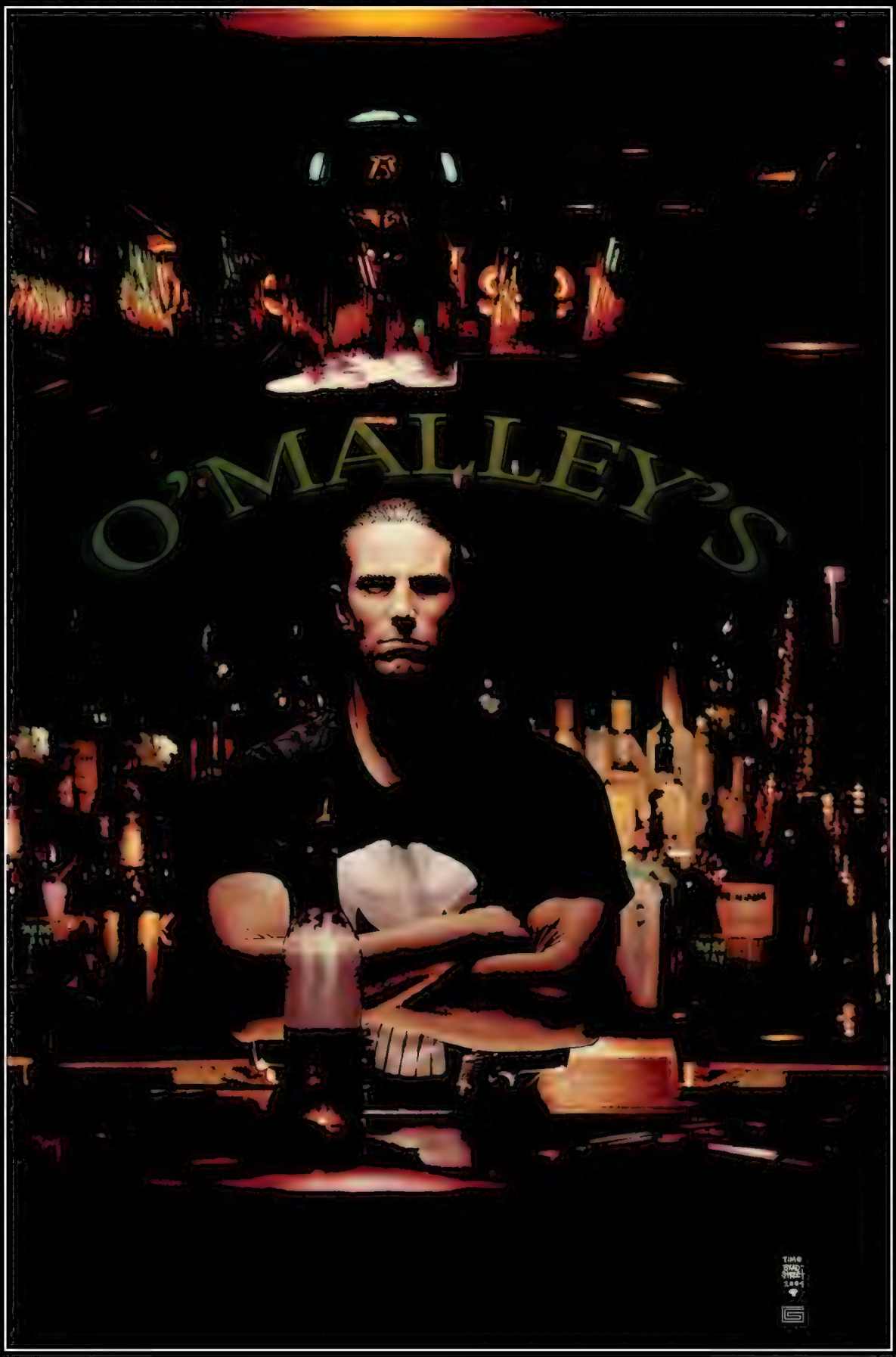
COPS HAVE GOT TO BE COMING IN SOON.
NO SIGN SO FAR.
David L. Lieberman, a.k.a. Micro.
Deceased; gunshot wound to the cranium.
I THINK I KNOW WHY YOU TOLD ME ABOUT BOB GARRETT.
BUT I'M NOT SO SURE THAT YOU DO.

YOU GAVE HIM A BEATING FOR RUNNING OUT ON HIS WIFE, BUT THAT'S NOT YOU. THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT YOU ARE NOW.
MAYBE, IN THE TIME AFTER YOU LOST YOUR FAMILY, YOU FELT THAT DARKNESS AGAIN: WHATEVER IT WAS YOU GAVE IN TO, BACK IN VIETNAM. MAYBE IT CONFUSED YOU, AND YOU LASHED OUT.
LATER YOU BECAME WHAT YOU BECAME, BUT THAT NIGHT ALL YOU DID WAS LOSE CONTROL.
IS THAT WHAT THAT STORY MEANS, FRANK? WAS THERE A TIME YOU WEREN'T SO CERTAIN OF YOURSELF, THAT YOUR LIFE WASN'T A FOREGONE CONCLUSION?
COULD YOU HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO BE THE PUNISHER?
DO YOU GO TO THAT GRAVE ONCE A YEAR TO APOLOGIZE TO LISA, AND MARIA, AND FRANK JUNIOR, BECAUSE YOU CHOSE TO USE THEIR DEATHS FOR SOMETHING DREADFUL?

GETTING A DEAD MAN TO HEAR YOUR CONFESSION, THAT FUCKING SAYS IT ALL.
THEN AGAIN, MAYBE YOU TOLD ME ABOUT BOB...BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT SO CERTAIN OF WHAT YOU'RE DOING NOW...?
NOW YOU'RE REACHING.
WE BOTH OF US KNOW WHAT HEROIN DOES.
BUT--NO, WHEN YOU SAW ME OUTSIDE YOUR PLACE, YOU--
YOU HESITATED...
HADN'T SEEN YOU IN EIGHT YEARS. THAT GAVE YOU AN EXTRA SECOND.
YOU HAD A GUN IN YOUR HANDS, I DIDN'T.
BUT--BUT YOU TOLD ME TO RUN, THAT MUST MEAN--
YOU SHOULD HAVE.
YOU REALLY GOING TO BEG?
Frank Castle, a.k.a. The Punisher.

Whereabouts unknown.

PUNISHER #7



KITCHEN IRISH

PART ONE

PRICE THE LOCALS OUT. LET THEM ROT IN QUEENS OR JERSEY.

BUILD YUPPIE CONDOS. CLUBS AND GYMS. A GALLERY OR TWO, AN INTERNET CAFE.

OPEN COFFEE SHOPS IN SHELLS OF ANCIENT SPORTS BARS, WHERE NOT SO LONG AGO THE WESTIES CUT EACH OTHER UP WITH RAZORS. GIVE THE NEIGHBORHOOD TO JOGGERS: THESE TWENTY BLOCKS THAT DRANK AND FOUGHT AND FUCKED THEIR WAY TO NEW YORK CITY LEGEND.

PRETEND IT NEVER HAPPENED. DENY, DENY, DENY.

JUST DON'T BE TOO SURPRISED WHEN THE PAST CREEPS UP AND BITES YOU IN THE ASS, THE WAY IT ALWAYS DOES.

CASE IN POINT.

I'M LEANING FORWARD, EATING, AND THAT'S WHAT SAVES ME WHEN THE WINDOW GOES. SHARDS SPIN PAST AN INCH ABOVE MY HEAD.
ONE GUILLOTINES THE WAITRESS.
THE KID BEHIND ME GETS THE REST OF MY SHARE.
MOST OF IT.
AND INDOORS, OUTDOORS, ALL AROUND, THE BOMB WORKS ITS MAGIC.

WHEN I WAKE I'M HALFWAY INTO SHOCK, WHICH TAKES A MOMENT TO SUPPRESS.
THERE'S A NOISE LIKE SOMEONE'S CHOKING.

CRYING, TOO.
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A LONG TIME I REALIZE I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. WHEN SHE VOMITS BLOOD AND GLASS AND DROPS DOWN DEAD, I'M GRATEFUL.
TROUBLE WITH A BOMB IS THERE'S NO ONE TO GET YOUR HANDS ON, NO WAY TO RETURN FIRE.
NO ONE TO KILL.

HELP ME.
HELP ME.
SO I DO.
FOR NO REASON I CAN PIN DOWN IT BECOMES VERY IMPORTANT THAT THIS GUY MAKES IT.
MAYBE HE HAS A WIFE AND KIDS.
MAYBE HE WANTS TO SEE THEM AGAIN LIKE NOTHING ELSE ON EARTH.
I FIND A RIP IN THE PULSING WALL AND SEAL IT WITH MY THUMB, THE TORN HEART DOING ITS BEST TO PUMP ITSELF TO DESTRUCTION. SNAPPED RIBS GOUGE MY WRIST AND I REMEMBER DOING THIS BEFORE-- UNDER FIRE, IN VIETNAM.
IF A MEDIC DOESN'T SHOW, I KNOW WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.

I GOT HIM! GO!
OKAY--
AMBULANCE
OH--
J--
--JESUS
DON'T LOSE IT.
YOU LOSE IT AND YOU'RE NO USE TO ANYONE.
GET OVER HERE. HELP THIS MAN.
NOW.
SO HE DOES.

IT TAKES THIRTY MINUTES' FRANTIC, BLOOD-SLICK WORK FOR THE KID TO STABILIZE THE GUY. ROOKIE TO VETERAN IN ONE UNIMAGINABLE LESSON.
BY THEN THE STREET OUTSIDE'S ALIVE WITH COPS AND MEDIA.
TIME I WAS GONE.
COMING THROUGH! WE GOTTA GET THIS GUY OUTTA HERE! MOVE!
HEY, JUST A MINUTE, I--
OH, FUCK ME.
I...
I OUGHT TO TAKE A LOOK AT THAT ARM.
PULL THE GLASS OUT AND STITCH IT UP. I'LL HANDLE THE REST.
HE DOES THE JOB WITHOUT ANOTHER WORD.
NOT EVERY DAY YOU MEET YOUR POLAR OPPOSITE.

BY NIGHTFALL THE MEDIA HAVE GOT A BODYCOUNT: ELEVEN DEAD AND THIRTY INJURED. EVERYONE WANTS IT TO BE AL QUEIDA, WHICH MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL.
THE COPS ARE WAITING ON FORENSICS. SO AM I.

THE BAR, THE KERRY CASTLE, WAS A WATERING HOLE FOR EVERY KIND OF SCUM--ONE OF THE LAST NOT TORN DOWN TO BUILD A STARBUCKS. IT'S THE REASON I WAS HERE TODAY.
FIGURED IF I STUCK AROUND, I'D FIND OUT WHO BOMBED WHO.

...CAPTAIN, I KNOW IT SEEMS HARD TO BELIEVE--
I PUT THAT IN MY REPORT AND MY BOSS'LL WIPE HIS ASS WITH IT. WITH ME TOO, PROBABLY.

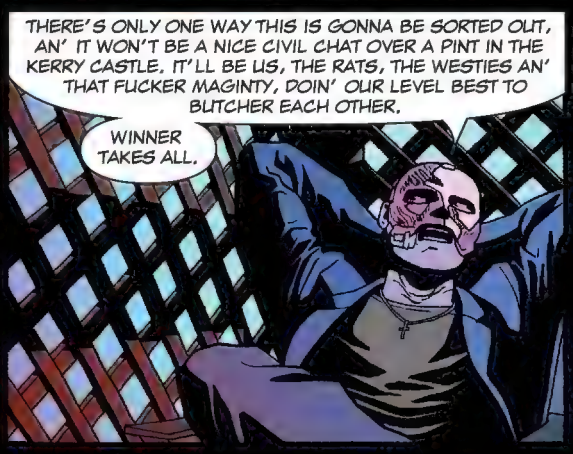
HEAR ME OUT.
THEY DO THE BEST IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVES WORK IN THE WORLD. THEY'RE FAMOUS FOR IT. THIS ONE IS CLASSIC--SEMTEX, VARIABLE FREQUENCY RECEIVER, I MEAN EVERYTHING WE'VE FOUND HAS THEIR SIGNATURE ALL OVER IT...
YEAH... BUT...

MY MOST EXPERIENCED GUY, DEAN, HE'S BEEN ON EXCHANGE JOBS WITH HALF THE POLICE AND MILITARY UNITS IN THE WESTERN WORLD. HE SPENT A YEAR IN LONDON IN THE EIGHTIES.
NOW WE'RE WAITING ON A CALL-BACK FROM M.I.6., BUT DEAN'S ALREADY MADE UP HIS MIND. HE SWEARS THIS IS WHO IT IS, HE'S PUT LIKE HALF A G ON IT--
RIGHT...!
BUT THE WAY I UNDERSTAND IT, THOSE GUYS USED TO CLEAN UP RAISIN' MONEY OVER HERE. YOU KNOW WHAT THE MICKS ARE LIKE, THEY LOVE THAT ANCIENT HISTORY SHIT...
NOT TOO MANY MICKS LEFT IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD.
STILL DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE...
NOT REALLY MY DEPARTMENT, CAPTAIN.
SORRY.
NO, NOR IS TELLIN' THE COMMISSIONER THE GODDAMNED I.R.A. JUST SET OFF A BOMB IN NEW YORK CITY.
FUCK.

TRICKY OUL' BUSINESS, BLOWIN' PEOPLE UP...
JAMESON
IRISH WHISKEY
YOU'RE FUCKING TELLING ME.
MICHAEL, GET YOUNG PETER A COKE OR SOMETHIN' THERE, WILL YE?
UNCLE FINN, I'M OLD ENOUGH TO DRINK WHISKEY--
IF THAT THING HAD GONE OFF WHEN IT WAS MEANT TO WE'D'VE WIPED OUT ALL THE OPPOSITION IN ONE GO. WE MIGHT EVEN'VE GOT MAGINTY.
MAGINTY'D NEVER'VE SHOWN UP, HE'S FAR TOO BLOODY SMART.
THE TROUBLE WI' RADIO DETONATORS IS WHAT FREQUENCY YE SET THEM TO. SOMETIMES, IF THERE'S SOMEONE IN THE VICINITY USIN' A SHORT-RANGE TRANSMITTER...
YEAH, AND HOW LIKELY IS THAT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BIGGEST FUCKING CITY IN THE WORLD?
AT FOUR A.M. THERE'D'VE BEEN NOBODY THERE BUT THE WESTIES AND THE RIVER RATS. NOW WE'VE GOT A BUNCH OF DEAD CIVILIANS ON OUR HANDS, THANKS TO YOUR BRILLIANT IDEA...
HEY, BOY.
FINN, WE'VE JUST BOMBED MANHATTAN, DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT MEANS? WE'VE BLOWN A DOZEN NEW YORKERS ALL OVER THEIR GODDAMNED NEIGHBORHOOD, AND IF--
HEY.

WHO THE FUCK ARE YOU.
TO TALK TO ME.
ABOUT BOMBS.
FINN--
D'YE THINK I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE WHEN A BOMB GOES OFF? IS THAT WHAT IT IS?
YE'VE BEEN OUT HERE A LONG TIME, HAVEN'T YE, MICHAEL? LIVIN' IN YER NICE BIG AMERICAN HOUSE, TALKIN' WI' YER WANKY FUCKIN' PUT-ON ACCENT?
LOOK AT ME, YE CUNT.
FINN-- I JUST--
I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT WE'VE JUST DONE.

THEY'RE GONNA KNOW IT WAS US, AREN'T THEY? THE OTHERS?
FUCK THEM. EVEN IF WE'D GONE TO THEIR STUPID WEE MEETIN', THERE'S NO WAY IT'D'VE ENDED PEACEFULLY.


THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY THIS IS GONNA BE SORTED OUT, AN' IT WON'T BE A NICE CIVIL CHAT OVER A PINT IN THE KERRY CASTLE. IT'LL BE US, THE RATS, THE WESTIES AN' THAT FUCKER MAGINTY, DOIN' OUR LEVEL BEST TO BUTCHER EACH OTHER.
WINNER TAKES ALL.

WHO IS THIS MAGINTY FELLA?
YOU DON'T WANNA KNOW, SON.

WELL I'M GONNA FUCKIN' HAVE TO KNOW, AREN'T I?
LOOK, WE DIDN'T COME HERE TO FRIG ABOUT, WE NEED THAT MONEY. EVERYONE ELSE BACK HOME'S SOLD OUT TO THAT FARCE OF A PEACE PROCESS--IF WE DON'T TURN UP THE PRESSURE SOON, WE MAY AS WELL SAY TO HELL WI' IT AN' HAND THE WHOLE PLACE TO THE BRITS!

AN' JUST SO YE KNOW: I'M NOT YOUR FUCKIN' SON--
PETER, I THINK I SAW ANOTHER BOTTLE OF JAMESON IN MICHAEL'S DRINKS CABINET THERE. WHY DON'T YE BE A GOOD LAD AN' NIP IN AN' GET IT FOR US?
COKE
JAM

VERY IDEALISTIC YOUNG MAN, YOUR NEPHEW.
HE IS, AYE. A TRUE BELIEVER.
BUT I'LL CROSS THAT BRIDGE WHEN I COME TO IT, I THINK.
SO...WHAT'VE YOU REALLY GOT PLANNED FOR OLD MAN NESBITT'S MILLIONS...?
I WANNA MOVE TO CALIFORNIA, AN' I'D LIKE TO RIDE ANGELINA JOLIE, IF SHE'LL HAVE ME.
I TAKE IT WE DO HAVE THE FIREPOWER FOR WHAT WE'RE ABOUT TO GET INTO, AYE?
THERE'S THE SHIPMENT WE WERE SUPPOSED TO SPLIT WITH THE COLOMBIANS, THAT SHOULD BE MORE THAN ENOUGH.
JESUS, THEY REALLY GOT BENT OUTTA SHAPE ABOUT THAT ONE...
I'LL BET THEY DID. YE'RE STILL THE SAME SNEAKY WEE SHITE YE ALWAYS WERE, AREN'T YE?
YE HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT.
WELL DON'T YOU WORRY, MICHAEL--
NEITHER HAVE I.

LOT OF PEOPLE GET SENTIMENTAL REMEMBERING THE WESTIES.
OLD IRISH WEAKNESS, THAT.
IN REALITY THEY WERE A HALF-DOZEN GANGS OF ANIMALS WHO RAN THE KITCHEN 'TIL THE SEVENTIES. LONG ON BRUTALITY, SHORT ON FORESIGHT.
WHEN THE MOB MOVED IN THEY WENT TO PIECES. COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT, MUCH LESS STOP IT. THE ONES THAT DIDN'T SHIP OUT JUST SNORTED THEIR SORROWS AWAY ON COKE.
DINER
HINKLEY CASTLE
ALL THE SAME, GUYS LIKE TOMMY TONER BUY THE MYTH. OLD-SCHOOL WARLORDS WHO RULED THE STREETS FROM WHISKEY BARS, WHO KEPT THE NEIGHBORHOOD SAFE (AND WHITE), WHO NEVER MISSED SAINT PADDY'S DAY-- THAT SOUNDS JUST FINE TO TOMMY.
HE THINKS HE'S THEIR INHERITOR. HIS ASSHOLES EVEN CALL THEMSELVES THE WESTIES.
POLICE LINE
TODAY, HE'S GOING TO FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT HE'S INHERITED.

THE KERRY CASTLE WAS TOMMY'S PLACE OF BUSINESS. HE'LL HAVE BEEN BREAKING HEADS ALL NIGHT AND ALL DAY, LOOKING FOR A LINE ON WHO MIGHT HAVE BOMBED HIS BAR.
I WANT TO KNOW HOW FAR HE'S GOTTEN.
NICE QUIET STREET THEY'VE PARKED IN. VERY OBLIGING.
BULLET FOR EACH OF HIS IDIOTS.
BULLET FOR EACH OF HIS KNEES.
THEN WE'LL GO FOR A DRIVE AND HAVE A TALK.
HEY--
SHIT--

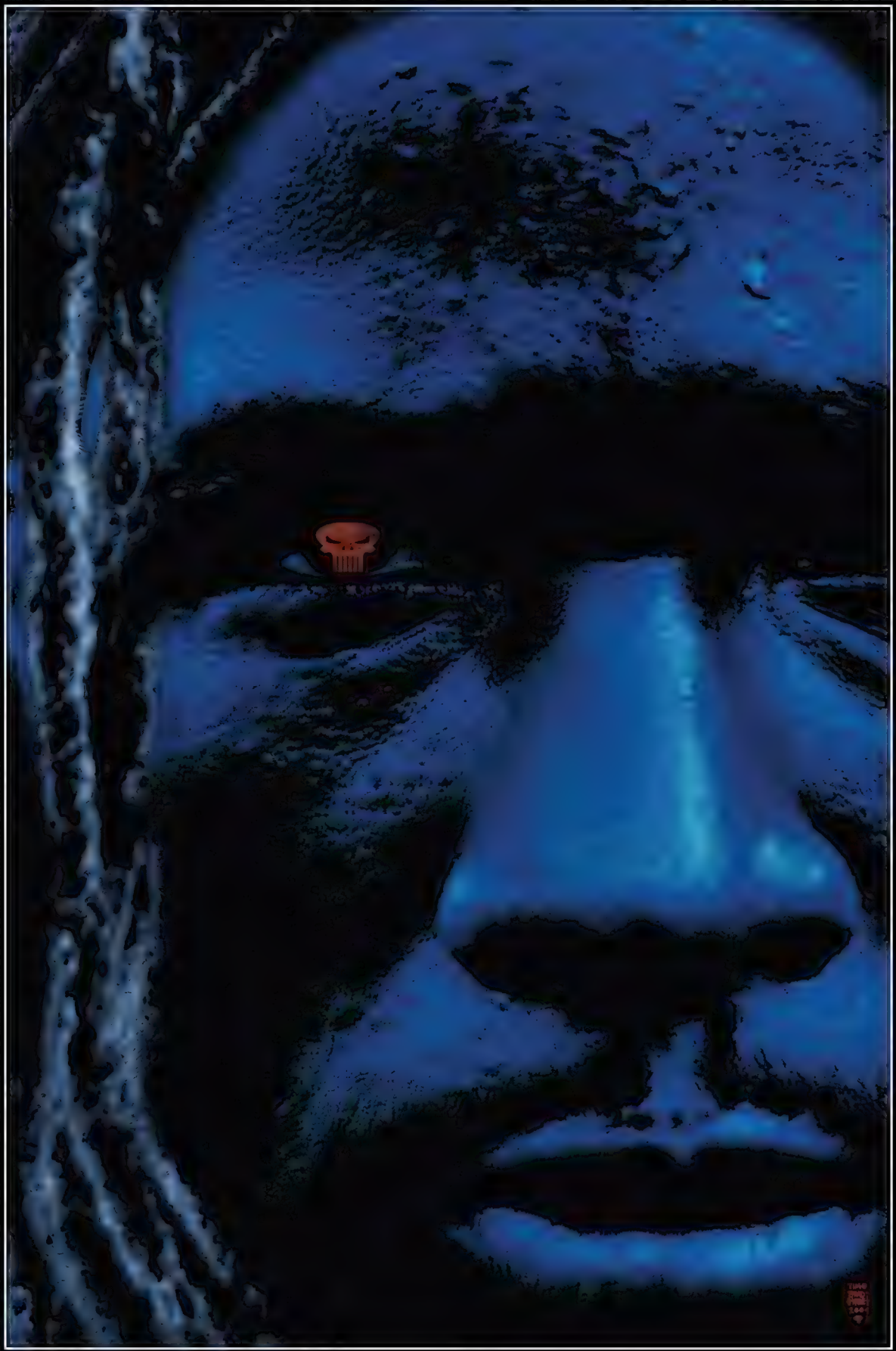
WH--
WH--?
TOMMY, COME ON!
SCRUB THAT IDEA.

GRANDAD! GRANDAD!
RIGHT HERE, BILLY! HEY, YOU STAY WHERE I CAN SEE YOU, DON'T GO RUNNIN' OFF OR NOTHIN'!
HEH.
HOW LONG SINCE YOU LAST DID A HOUDINI ON SOMEONE, NAPPER?
WH... WHAT...?
LOOK, YOU GOT ME CONFUSED WITH SOMEONE ELSE, BUDDY...
NO, NO. NAPPER FRENCH, USED TO DO HOUDINIS FOR POPS NESBITT.
DISAPPEARIN' ACTS.
YOU CUT DEAD BODIES INTO SO MANY PIECES THE COPS COULD NEVER FIND 'EM ALL.

OKAY, YOU LISTEN TO ME, YOU BLACK PIECE OF SHIT: YOU TELL THAT FUCK NESBITT I BEEN RETIRED FOR THIRTY YEARS, AN' IF--
MIGHT NOT BE TOO EASY, NAPPER.
OLD MAN'S HEART GAVE OUT LAST YEAR. DIED IN THE MOUTH OF A SWEET YELLOW WHORE.
I'M THE ONE NEEDS THAT SKILL OF YOURS NOW.
WELL YOU CAN GO FUCK YOURSELF, WHOEVER THE HELL YOU ARE!
DO YOU SEE THAT VAN OVER THERE? DO YOU SEE WHO'S IN THE BACK OF IT?
EH?
PUT YOUR GLASSES ON, GRANDFATHER.
I'LL GIVE YOU GRANDFATHER, YOU PRICK!
IT'LL BE WELL WORTH YOUR TIME, I PROMISE YOU THAT.
WHAT--

PLEASE--JESUS, PLEASE-- IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO THAT BOY, HIS MOTHER'LL DIE OF GRIEF...!
YOU'RE HIRED.
BUT...WHAT THE HELL DO YOU NEED ME FOR? I MEAN ANYONE CAN CUT UP A BODY...
NOT THE WAY YOU CAN, NAPPER. I HEARD STORIES ABOUT YOU. I EVEN SEEN SOME PICTURES.
AN' WHEN WORD GETS OUT THAT YOU'RE BACK IN THE GAME, ALL THE RIGHT PEOPLE'LL SHIT ALL OVER THEMSELVES...
OH, JESUS CHRIST.
WHO ARE YOU?

THEY CALL ME MAGINTY.
I'M THE BADDEST NIGGER EVER CAME OUTTA DUBLIN TOWN.
YOU WON'T'VE HEARD OF ME, I'M A LITTLE AFTER YOUR TIME. BUT I'M AS IRISH AS ANY ONE OF YOU BEER-SWILLIN', BITCH-BEATIN', LARDY-ASS WHITE FUCKS THAT EVER WALKED THE KITCHEN.
SO TELL ME SOMETHIN', NAPPER. I'M DYIN' TO FUCKIN' KNOW.
LEANDRO FERNANDEZ '04
DID YOU EVER DO A HOUDINI ON A MAN WHO WAS STILL ALIVE?



COFFEE
DINER
HE KERRY
WHAT D'YOU MAKE OF THE STATES THEN, LAD?
GRUB'S ALL RIGHT. BIT SHIT THE WAY YOU CAN'T HAVE A FAG ANYWHERE.
AYE, WELL DON'T SAY FAG, SAY CIGARETTE. FAG MEANS SOMETHING DIFFERENT OVER HERE.
AND STOP CALLING PEOPLE GEEZERS, THAT JUST MEANS SENILE OLD BASTARD.
LIKE YOU, YORKIE?
PISS OFF. D'YOU KNOW, I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER MET ONE OF YOU SOFT LONDON WANKERS I'VE UNDERSTOOD COMPLETELY.
WHERE'S THIS MATE OF YOURS, THEN?
HE'LL BE ALONG. WE STAY VISIBLE, STAY IN THIS AREA, HE'LL NOTICE US.
AND HE'S NOT EXACTLY A MATE. WE DID A TOUR WITH THE AUSSIES TOGETHER IN VIETNAM, BUT...NO.
HE'S NOT REALLY A MATE AT ALL.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

KITCHEN IRISH

PART TWO

PLEASE, IN THE NAME OF GOD ALMIGHTY, DON'T MAKE ME DO THIS...!
MACHINE TOOLS
SOUNDS LIKE YOUR GRANDAD DOESN'T WANT TO HELP US, BILLY.
LOOK, CUTTIN' UP A--UH--
DOIN' WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT, IT'S HARD ENOUGH WHEN THEY'RE DEAD! BUT ALIVE, I MEAN IT'S--IT'S--
CRUEL?
DON'T!!
OH GOD, OKAY. OKAY.
BUT IT'S JUST NOT THAT SIMPLE, I MEAN YOU NEED ALL KINDS OF DIFFERENT KNIVES, AND...

AT LEAST KEEP THE BOY OUT.
DON'T LET HIM SEE.
TAKE HIM NEXT DOOR.
WAIT.
BILLY, GRANDAD HAS TO...HAS TO DO SOMETHING FOR THESE MEN, ALL RIGHT? AND AS SOON AS IT'S DONE, WE'LL GO HOME TO YOUR MOM, OKAY?
O...OKAY...
YOU BE A GOOD BOY FOR YOUR GRANDAD. WE'LL BE OUT OF HERE IN NO TIME AT ALL.
I LOVE YOU, BILLY.
YOU JUST REMEMBER NOW, YOUR GRANDAD LOVES YOU.

NAPPER FRENCH--
TOMMY TONER.
YOU CAN MAKE A START WITH HIS COCK.
NO, JUST KIDDIN', HIS LEFT HAND'LL DO FINE.

THERE.
GOT IT.

JESUS CHRIST!
HUSH, NOW.
DAVID?
DAVID, DID YOU SAY SOMETHING?
N-N-N-NO--!
I'VE GOT HER, BUNK.
COOL.
YOU MUST TRY SOME OF THIS MERLOT, IT IS SIMPLY DIVINE...

OH MY GOD--
FUCK!!
WHAT IN GOD'S NAME IS THIS, ARE YOU PEOPLE *PIRATES* OR SOMETHING?
PIRATES? YEAH, WE'RE FUCKIN' PIRATES. MEANEST CREW EVER SAILED OUTTA NEW YORK CITY.
WE'RE THE *RIVER RATS*, BOY.
I-I'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD OF YOU--!
YOU HAVE NOW.
THREE MINUTES.
RIGHT.
PLEASE DON'T HURT US! *PLEASE!*
LOOK, WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THIS IS ABOUT! WE WERE JUST OUT FOR THE WEEKEND, SAILING!

YEAH, WE KNOW. YOU'RE CREATURES OF HABIT, AIN'T YOU?
WE WATCH THESE WATERS, WE KNOW WHAT GOES ON. LAST WEEKEND OF EVERY MONTH WE SEE THIS BIG FAT YACHT OF YOURS, HEADED UP TO THE HAMPTONS OR WHEREVER IT IS YOU RICH PRICKS GO...
HOW WE DOIN'?
PURSES AND WALLETS! COUPLE OF JEWELRY BOXES!
BRING IT ALL.
GOT A SAFE!
BRING IT AN' LET'S GO.
YOU KNOW, LADY, THOSE ARE SOME BIG GODDAMN PEARLS YOU GOT STRUNG AROUND YOUR NECK...
I--
I CAN'T UNDO THE CLASP--
YOU UNDO THE CLASP OR I'LL UNDO YOUR HEAD.
HERE! HERE!
SEE HOW EASY IT IS?
FINGERS!!

AAAAAAAAAAAAHH!!
STUPID SON OF A BITCH!
WE'RE DONE.
AAAAAAAH! JESUS! AAAAAAAH!!
EAST RIVER TOMORROW? OR OUT AROUND STATEN?
THE COPS'LL HAVE BOATS OUT LOOKIN' FOR US. WE'LL TAKE A BREAK, LOOK INTO THIS OTHER THING.
AND THE LAST ONE AT THE BAR BUYS THE DRINKS...

FRANK CASTLE, ANDY LORIMER.
RIGHT: YES, I'M STILL WITH M.I.6.; YES, I'M HERE WORKING; NO, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT DON'T KNOW THAT BRITISH INTELLIGENCE IS ON THE GROUND IN NEW YORK.
NO, IT'S NOT A COINCIDENCE AN I.R.A. UNIT SET OFF A BOMB IN HELL'S KITCHEN THE DAY BEFORE I ARRIVED.
THAT'S YOUR BOMBER, FINN COOLEY. RAN AN ACTIVE SERVICE UNIT IN LONDONDERRY EIGHTY-SIX TO NINETY-THREE, AT WHICH POINT HE WAS JAILED FOR MURDER. RELEASED AS PART OF THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT FIVE YEARS LATER.
WE HAD A TIP-OFF HE CROSSED INTO THE STATES FROM CANADA, ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO.
YOU KNEW HE WAS COMING HERE?
WELL, WE DIDN'T THINK HE WAS GOING TO BLOW THE FUCK OUT OF THE PLACE. THAT'S THE LAST THING WE EXPECTED.
HE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THAT ANYMORE, BY THE WAY. HAD A LITTLE ACCIDENT.
INVOLVING A BOMB.

WHICH HE'D JUST PLANTED IN A DRAIN OUTSIDE A POLICE STATION IN BELFAST, WHEN IT WENT OFF EARLY AND TURNED THE CUNT INTO QUASI-FUCKING-MODO.
I.R.A. OWN GOAL.
IF THERE WAS ONE THING GUARANTEED TO WARM THE HEART OF ANY BRITISH SOLDIER, IT WAS ONE OF THOSE FUCKING WANKERS BLOWING HIMSELF UP BY ACCIDENT.
ANYWAY.
WE THINK FINN CAME HERE TO CONTACT THIS BLOKE...
THIS ONE I KNOW.
MICHAEL MORRISON. GUNS AND NARCOTICS. DOES A LOT OF BUSINESS WITH THE RUSSIAN MOB.
AYE, I'LL BET HE DOES. HE'S A MAJOR IRISH REPUBLICAN FUNDRAISER.
Y'SEE, STRICTLY SPEAKING, FINN'S NOT WITH THE I.R.A. ANYMORE. HE CLAIMS TO BE PART OF THE CONTINUITY I.R.A., THE BOYS THAT REJECTED THE PEACE PROCESS, BUT EVEN THEY SEEM A LITTLE BIT LEERY OF HIM.
WE'RE PRETTY SURE MICHAEL HERE'S THE ONLY MAN IN THE U.S. END OF THE MOVEMENT THAT HE'D STILL FIND SYMPATHETIC. THEY GO BACK A LONG WAY.
OR MAYBE HE'S JUST SHIT-SCARED OF HIM.
HE CAN BE A RIGHT EVIL BASTARD WHEN HE WANTS TO, FINN.

SO WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE?
HAVEN'T A CLUE. THE BOMB'S A BIT OF A PUZZLER, THOUGH.
BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME FINN'S SURFACED IN NEARLY FIVE YEARS, SO LONDON THOUGHT IT'D BE A NICE OPPORTUNITY FOR ME TO NIP OVER AND SLOT HIM.
SOME OF THE REPUBLICAN RANK-AND-FILE DON'T LIKE THERE *BEING* A PEACE PROCESS. FOR THEM, ANYTHING SHORT OF TOTAL VICTORY--CLOUD-FUCKING CUCKOO-LAND, BY THE WAY--IS SEEN AS CAPITULATING TO THE BRITISH.
NOW, YOU GET SOMEONE LIKE FINN COOLEY, WHO REFUSES TO SIT DOWN WITH ANYONE--WELL, A BLOKE LIKE THAT CAN QUITE EASILY BECOME A FIGUREHEAD. AND THAT MEANS PROBLEMS FOR THE LEADERSHIP.
SO THE NEXT TIME SINN FEIN--THAT'S THE I.R.A.'S POLITICAL WING--ARE TALKING TO TONY BLAIR AND HIS PALS, A LARGE HINT IS DROPPED THAT FINN SUDDENLY DISAPPEARING WOULD BE A VERY GOOD THING FOR EVERYONE. A RUMOR ABOUT HIS TRAVEL PLANS FINDS ITS WAY INTO THE CONVERSATION.
AND HEY-PRESTO, YORKIE MITCHELL'S ON A PLANE TO J.F.K.
WASHINGTON SAYS THEY WON'T SANCTION A BRITISH ASSASSIN OPERATING ON U.S. SOIL. WE DECIDED TO GO AHEAD WITHOUT THEM.
WHICH WAS WHEN I THOUGHT OF YOU, FRANK, BECAUSE YOU'RE THE LOCAL EXPERT ON THIS SORT OF CARRY-ON.
I WAS IN BELFAST IN THE SEVENTIES, AND I CAN TELL YOU:
YOU DON'T WANT SOME BASTARD EXPORTING THAT SHITE HERE.

CHALK UP ANOTHER ONE! WAH-HOOOO!
DANNI, YOU STUPID CUNT!
QUIT WAVIN' THAT FUCKIN' BACKPACK AROUND! YOU DROP THAT THING IN THE RIVER AN' YOU'RE GONNA BE GOIN' IN AFTER IT!
ASSHOLE!
COME ON, POLL. YOU KNOW DANNI.
MORE'S THE GODDAMN PITY.
COME ON.
WET YOUR WHISTLE, EAMON?
MAN, HELL HATH NO FURY LIKE POLLY PISSED, HUH?
WHY THE FUCK NOT...
UH-UH.
SHIT, MAYBE SHE'S JEALOUS.
UH?

WHY WOULD POLLY BE JEALOUS OF DANNI?
FUCK, MAN, YOU KNOW. SHE'S THE ONLY OTHER COOZE IN THE RIVER RATS, MAYBE POLLY THINKS YOU'LL GET SOMETHIN' GOIN' WITH HER.
POLLY'S MY GODDAMN SISTER.
EVEN IF I WAS TO GO OUT OF MY MIND AN' FUCK A PIG LIKE DANNI, WHAT WOULD POLLY HAVE TO BE JEALOUS ABOUT?
JESUS, EAMON... I MEAN...
WHAT KINDA SICK ASSHOLE ARE YOU, ANYWAY?
EAMON, IT WAS ONLY A FUCKIN' JOKE...!
IT WAS A REALLY FUCKIN' FUNNY ONE.
PRICK.

ONE QUESTION.
AYE.
ANDY-- OR LANCE-CORPORAL LORIMER AS HE'S OTHERWISE KNOWN--IS NOT AN OFFICIAL PART OF THIS OPERATION. HE'S HERE AS A FAVOR I OWED HIS DAD.
REGIMENTAL SERGEANT-MAJOR STEPHEN LORIMER.
THE LAST BRITISH SERVICEMAN TO DIE IN NORTHERN IRELAND.
HE WAS SHOT DEAD ON PATROL BY THIS LITTLE BASTARD, WHO WAS ALL OF SIXTEEN AT THE TIME.
PETER COOLEY, FINN'S NEPHEW.

SO I'M NOT EXACTLY GOING BY THE BOOK, BUT...WELL.
YOU KNOW HOW IT IS WHEN YOU OWE A MATE A FAVOR.
I KNOW HOW IT IS WHEN YOU WANT SOME PIECE OF SHIT DEAD LIKE NOTHING ELSE ON EARTH.
YOU ARMED?
WE CAN GO TO THE BRITISH CONSULATE IF WE HAVE TO. IT'S JUST THEY'D RATHER WE DIDN'T.
RIGHT.
JUST MAKE SURE THAT THIS IS A ONE-OFF.
DONE.
THANK YOU, FRANK.

AH, I'D SAY ABOUT A POUND, MAYBE A POUND AN' A HALF.
SURE, IT'LL FIT IN THE BOX NO PROBLEM. I'LL HAVE IT ALL PACKAGED UP AN' READY TO GO.
YEAH, I GOT WAYBILLS, I GOT EVERYTHING I NEED, CAN YOU JUST GO AHEAD AN' SCHEDULE A PICKUP?
WHAT?
FORTY-EIGHT DOLLARS FOR SAME-DAY DELIVERY? DOES THE GUY STOP AT OUTBACK AFTERWARDS, OR SOMETHIN'? AM I BUYIN' THE SON OF A BITCH A T-BONE?
GIVE WHO A TRY?
FUCK U.P.S.! IF I WANTED U.P.S. I WOULDN'T'VE CALLED YOU, COCKSUCKER! JUST GO ON AN' SCHEDULE THE MOTHERFUCKER, I'LL PAY YOUR GODDAMN FORTY-EIGHT FUCKIN' DOLLARS!
FAGGOT.
THAT'S ONE BUNCH OF ASSHOLES AIN'T GONNA DIE POOR, I'LL FUCKIN' TELL YOU THAT MUCH.
YOU ONE CHEAP MUTHAFUCKA, MAGINTY.
YEAH, WHYN'T YOU RUN YO' IRISH ASS OVER THERE AN' DELIVER THE GODDAMN THING YO'SELF, YOU SWEATIN' FIFTY FUCKIN' DOLLAS?

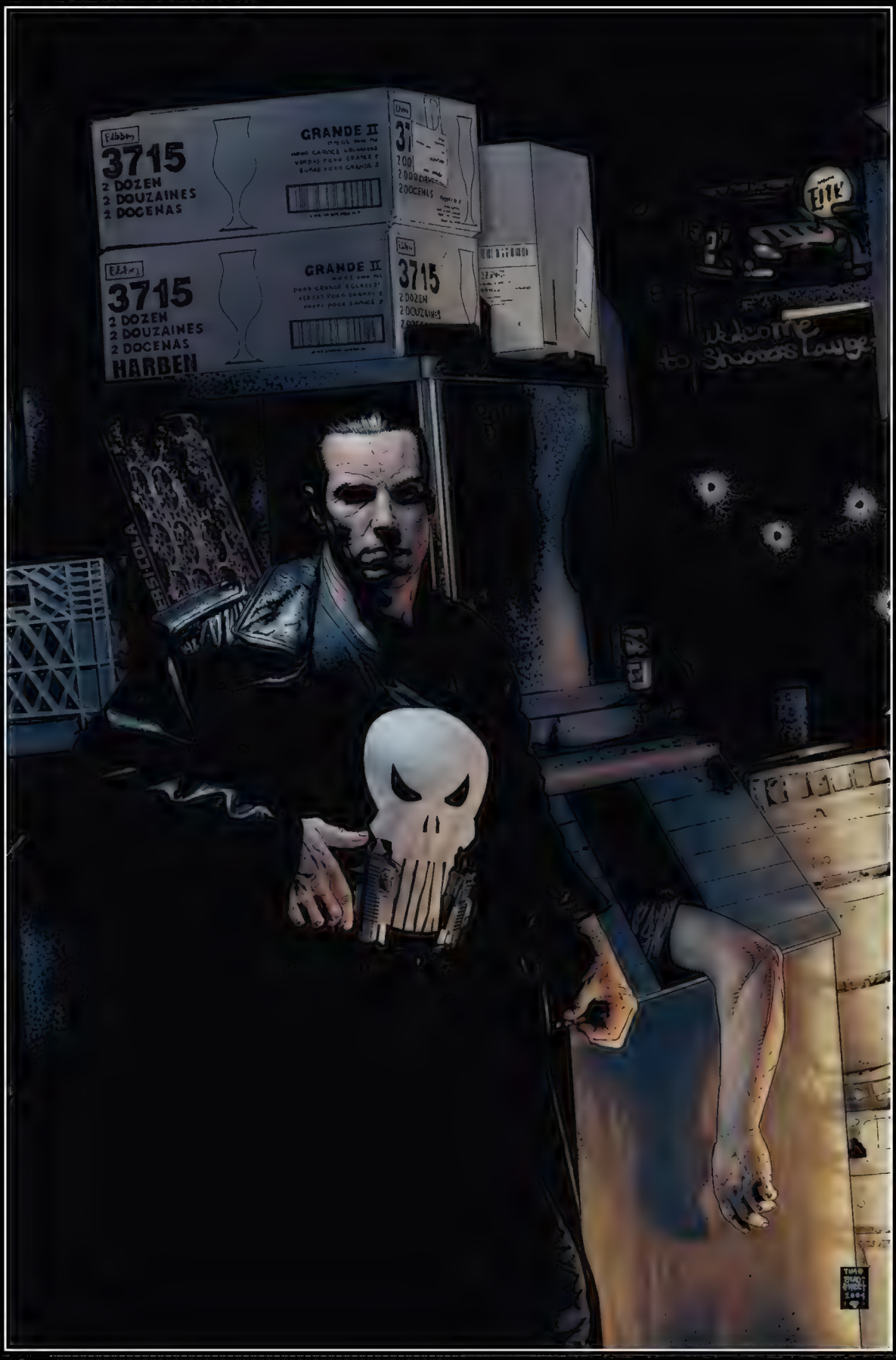
BECAUSE!
ASSHOLES!!
THE WESTIES FUCKIN' KNOW ME! THEY'LL KILL ME ON FUCKIN' SIGHT! I SEND YOU DICKHEADS AN' THEY'LL KILL YOU FOR BEIN' NIGGERS--THEN THEY'LL SEE YOU'RE DELIVERIN' THEIR BOSS'S HAND AN' THEY'LL FUCKIN' KILL YOU AGAIN!
THE IDEA IS TO SCARE THEM, REMEMBER? 'CAUSE THEY OUTNUMBER US TEN TO ONE? ENOUGH OF TOMMY TONER SHOWS UP SAME-DAY DELIVERY, AN' THE ONES THAT DON'T LEAVE TOWN'LL BE SHOOTIN' AT FUCKIN' SHADOWS!
NOW. YOU. GO NEXT DOOR AN' TELL NAPPER TO SLICE THAT BASTARD'S LIPS OFF.
AN' YOU, SHITHEAD...
...DON'T FUCKIN' CALL ME CHEAP.

O'MALLEY'S TRADITIONAL CASK ALE
BLOODY NARROWBACKS...
Celtic Sounds
WHAT'S THAT, UNCLE FINN?
NARROWBACKS, PETER. IRISH AMERICANS.
PALE IMITATION OF THE REAL FUCKIN' THING.
CHRIST, WE'VE DONE ALL RIGHT OUT OF THEM, OVER THE YEARS...
AYE, AN' THAT'S ABOUT ALL THEY'RE GOOD FOR.
FEW DOLLARS IN THE COLLECTIN' TIN FOR THE FAMILIES OF PRISONERS, VERSE OR TWO OF THE SOLDIERS' SONG, SHOUT BRITS OUT OF IRELAND-- HAVE ANOTHER DRINK-- PISS YER PANTS AN' GO HOME.
LEAVE THE REAL WORK TO SOME OTHER FUCKER.

JESUS, IS IT ANY WONDER I'M SICK TO MY BACK TEETH OF THE WHOLE FUCKIN' THING...?
WHAT?
FIGURE OF SPEECH, PETER. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
I THOUGHT YE SAID WE'D BE WAITIN' NO MORE'N A COUPLA MINUTES?
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT. EVERYONE DRINKS HERE; THERE'S USUALLY HALF A DOZEN WESTIES OR RIVER RATS OR BOTH SCATTERED AROUND THE PLACE...
SO EITHER YOU'RE TALKIN' SHITE AGAIN, MICHAEL--
--OR THEY'VE GOT A HEAD START ON US, AN' THEY'RE ALL AWAY OUT LOOKIN' FOR NESBITT'S MONEY.
I WOULDN'T FUCKING BRING US TO QUEENS IF I DIDN'T HAVE GOOD REASON.
AN' LET'S NOT FORGET MAGINTY--
GODDAMMIT, I KNEW IT WAS YOU!
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE'VE A REAL HERO IN WITH US TONIGHT! A MAN WHO HAS FOUGHT AND SUFFERED--GOD, LOOK HOW HE'S SUFFERED! FOR OUR OWN DEAR IRELAND!!
LIFT UP YOUR GLASSES, AND LET'S HAVE A DRINK TO FINN COOLEY!
NO.
PLEASE NO.

FINN COOLEY!
FINN COOLEY!
LOOK AT HIS POOR FACE!
FINN COOLEY!
WAIT A MINUTE-- FOR FUCK'S SAKE--
FINN COOLEY.
ANYONE NOT WANTING TO DIE FOR IRELAND--

BETTER CLEAR ON OUT THE BACK.
LEANDRO FERNANDEZ '14


GRANDE II
3715
2 DOZEN
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HARBEN
3715
2 DOZEN
2 DOUZAINES
2 DOCENAS
GRANDE II
3715
2 DOZEN
2 DOUZAINES
2 DOCENAS
Welcome
to Shooters Lounge

EXIT
BLOODY HELL...
AYE, FRANK TENDS TO HAVE THAT EFFECT ON PEOPLE.
JUST REMEMBER WE'RE DOING THIS HIS WAY. ONE OF THOSE BOYS DOES MAKE IT OUT, HE WANTS A PRISONER.
SO NO KILLING, ANDY.
NOT EVEN IF IT'S THE CUNT WHO SHOT YOUR DAD.
...THIS ALL ABOUT, MISTER?
ANSWERS.
KEEP YOUR HANDS WHERE I CAN SEE THEM.
ONE OF THESE DAYS WE GOTTA FIND OURSELVES A BETTER BAR...
YOU MEAN ONE WHERE YOU CAN FIT YOUR GIANT ASS THROUGH THE DOOR?
POLLY, ALL I'M SAYIN'S--
F...F... F...

KITCHEN IRISH

PART THREE

THAT'S THE RIVER RATS!
BIG FUCKIN' DEAL! COME ON!
MOST ANYONE ELSE WOULD HAVE SHUT THE DOOR AND RUN. THIS IS LIKE NINE-MILLIMETER DAY AT JUNIOR HIGH.
HAVE TO CLOSE THEM DOWN FAST.
BEFORE THEY GET ENOUGH GUNS IN HERE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
POLLY!
FAT CUNT'S BRAINS IN MY FUCKIN' EYES--
LET'S GO, COCKSUCKER--!
CONTACT.
EXIT
SHOOT LOW.

AAAH--!
FUCK!
AAAAAAAAHHH!!
EXIT
FINN COOLEY! SURRENDER!
OH JESUS-- OH JESUS--
THAT'S A FUCKIN' BRIT--
EXIT
...HERE, LOOK AT THIS.
IT'S MISTER LET'S-HAVE-A-DRINK-TO-FINN-COOLEY.
WE'VE GOTTA GO!
POLL, WE'VE GOT THIS FUCKER--!
EAMON, THAT GUY'S THE FUCKIN' PUNISHER.
WE HAVE GOT TO GO.

AAAAAAH! UNCLE FINN! AAAAAAAAAHH!!
C'MERE, YE CUNT YE--
AW, THE DIRTY BASTARD'S SHIT HIMSELF!
NO--!
TIME TO JOIN THE FIGHT FOR DEAR OUL' IRELAND, MY FRIEND!
POLLY?
EAMON?
D-D-D-DON'T SHOOT--!
OH, FOR FUCK'S SAKE...!
GIVE IT A TRY, YORKIE?
WE EVEN SCRATCH A YANK CIVILIAN AND WE'LL NEVER HEAR THE END OF IT.
NOT TO MENTION WHAT FRANK WOULD HAVE TO SAY.

THIS IS FUCKIN' MENTAL!
TWENNY YARDS AN' WE'LL BE AT THE MOTOR, JUST KEEP MOVIN'...
UNCLE FINN! MICHAEL!
HELP US! UNCLE FINN, MY LEGS! HELP!!
FINN--
KEEP FUCKIN' MOVIN...!
UNCLE FINN, FOR GOD'S SAKE!
WHERE THE FUCK ARE YOU TWO--
BUNK, RUN!

UH?
FUCKIN' TOSSERS...!
AYE.
RULES OF ENGAGEMENT, THE BANE OF MY BLOODY LIFE.
STILL, LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE:
WE STILL GOT A RESULT.

AAAOOW, JESUS!!
SIT STILL, BUNK.
THAT WAS FINN COOLEY IN THAT BAR.
YOU SURE?
YOU DON'T MISTAKE A FACE LIKE THAT.
IF HE'S IN TOWN--JESUS, IT'S THIS THING. IT'S THIS FUCKING THING ABOUT OLD MAN NESBITT'S MONEY.
IT'S REAL.
OKAY, IT'S NOT JUST GONNA BE COOLEY, WE ALREADY KNOW THE WESTIES'RE IN ON IT TOO. AN' MAGINTY, THAT BLACK FUCK'S GONNA BE CREEPIN' AROUND OUT THERE...
WE'RE GONNA NEED EVERYONE FOR THIS. EVERY GUN WE CAN GET AS FAST AS WE CAN GET 'EM.
POLLY, WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT? THAT BASTARD TOOK OUT THE ENTIRE FUCKIN' RIVER RATS, I MEAN WE JUST CEASED TO EXIST...!
DON'T BE STUPID, WE CAN ALWAYS GET MORE MORONS.
IRISH CATHOLICS, BUNK. I'VE GOT A LIST OF COUSINS AS LONG AS YOUR FUCKIN' ARM.

PETER COOLEY.
MEMBER OF THE PROVISIONAL I.R.A, FROM NINETY-FOUR TO NINETY-EIGHT, AT WHICH TIME HE LEFT THE MOVEMENT ALONG WITH HIS UNCLE FINN. SPOTTED SINCE THAT TIME IN THE COMPANY OF KNOWN TERRORISTS IN COLOMBIA, SPAIN AND SAUDI ARABIA.
SUSPECTED OF THE MURDERS OF THREE MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH SECURITY FORCES. NEVER CONVICTED--NEVER EVEN ARRESTED.
SUSPECTED *BOLLOCKS*, WE KNOW YOU DID TWO OF THEM FOR CERTAIN...
WHO-- WHO ARE YOU?
ARE YOU M.I.6?
BY WAY OF THE S.A.S., BY WAY OF THE PARACHUTE REGIMENT.
FEEL FREE TO SCREAM YOUR FUCKING HEAD OFF.

I WON'T SCREAM FOR YOU, YE FUCKIN' BRITISH BASTARD...
NO? AH, WELL.
MAYBE YOU WILL FOR THIS BLOKE OVER HERE.
HE WANTS TO KNOW WHY YOU AND YOUR UNCLE PUT FIFTY POUNDS OF SEMTEX IN A BAR IN NEW YORK CITY, AND DETONATED IT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.
HE WAS THERE AT THE TIME. HE SAW A DOZEN PEOPLE SPREAD ACROSS THE WALLS LIKE PAINT.
AS FOR THIS YOUNG MAN, THE LAST OF THOSE THREE SQUADDIES YOU KILLED JUST HAPPENED TO BE HIS DAD.
I THINK YOU CAN PROBABLY GUESS WHAT HE WANTS.
ALL IN ALL, BOY--
--I'D SAY YOU WERE FUCKED.

PASTA REVOLUTION
PRAY 4 JOINT
OKAY?
FUCKIN' MAGIC.
I TOLD YOU BASTARD!
PRICK!
WHERE IS THIS, ANYWAY?
I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY. AFTER YOU THREW THAT GUY OUT THE DOOR I JUST PUT MY FOOT DOWN AND DROVE.
JEEEZUS--!
JESUS WHAT?
IT'S THIS, IT'S FUCKING KILLING ME. THE BULLET WENT RIGHT ACROSS MY HAND, I THINK IT NICKED A TENDON...
AW, WELL, MY HEART FUCKIN' BLEEDS FOR YE, MICHAEL!
FUCK!!
HAVE-- HAVE YOU YER FUCKIN'--
FUCKIN' FACE TAPED ONTO YE?

I MEAN, IS IT GONNA-- I DUNNO, SLIP?
YE MEAN LIKE YOUR ACCENT, AYE?
HHHH.
ACCORDIN' TO THE DOCTOR UP AT DUNDONALD, THE FACIAL TISSUE DOESN'T WANNA STICK TO THE BONE. THE MASK'S MEANT TO KEEP IT IN PLACE AN' HELP IT STICK--AN' NO, BEFORE YE ASK, I DON'T CARRY A SPARE ONE ROUND WI' ME.
DOESN'T IT HURT, LIKE?
MOSTA THE NERVE ENDIN'S WERE DESTROYED IN THE EXPLOSION. HALF THE TIME I DON'T FEEL ANYTHIN' AT ALL.
LISTEN, WHO THE FUCK WAS THAT BIG FELLA BACK THERE?
OH, JESUS... HE'S CALLED THE PUNISHER, HE'S THIS FUCKIN' HEAD-THE-BALL GOES AROUND SHOOTIN' MAFIOSI. OR ANYONE HE TAKES A FANCY TO, REALLY.
IT'S NOT JUST HIM, FINN, THEM BOYS OUT THE BACK TONIGHT WERE BRITISH. THERE'S SOME SORTA HIT SQUAD AFTER US--I DUNNO WHY, BUT WE'VE GOTTA DROP WHAT WE'RE DOIN' AN' GET OUTTA TOWN RIGHT NOW...
YE MEAN WE SHOULD QUIT?
IS THAT WHAT YE MEAN?
WELL... UH...MAYBE JUST--
I JUST THREW MY OWN FUCKIN' NEPHEW TO THE WOLVES, MICHAEL. SO BEAR THAT IN MIND WHILE YE LISTEN TO WHAT I'VE GOT TO SAY.

D'YE KNOW WHAT I RECKON I'VE BEEN ALL MY LIFE? WHEN I REALLY STOP AN' THINK ABOUT IT?
I THINK ALL I'VE EVER BEEN IS SOMEONE'S NIGGER.
WHAT...?
FIRST THE PRODS, THE FUCKIN' PROTESTANT CUNTS WHO TOOK OUR COUNTRY FROM US AN' BEAT US DOWN LIKE WE WERE DOGS. THEN THE BRITS WHO CAME TO PROTECT THEM, IN THE NAME OF HER FUCKIN' MAJESTY.
AN' THEN THEM BASTARDS ON THE ARMY COUNCIL, WHO SENT MEN LIKE ME OUT TO KILL FOR THEM--AN' IN THE END THEY SOLD US OUT! I GOT FUCKIN' MUTILATED, AN' FOR WHAT?
I WAS A NIGGER TO EVERY BLOODY ONE OF THEM. I DIDN'T KNOW IT, BUT I WAS THEIR SLAVE.
FINN... CAN YOU MAYBE KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN...?
SO WE ARE STAYIN' HERE. WE'RE GETTIN' THAT MONEY. AN' FUCK THE PUNISHER, AN' FUCK THE BRITS, AN' FUCK THE WESTIES AN' MAGINTY AN' THE RIVER RATS AS WELL--
FINN, THIS IS NOT BELFAST--
'CAUSE I'LL BE NOBODY'S NIGGER EVER AGAIN.
FUCK.

YE CAN DO WHAT YE WANT TO ME.
YE'LL GET NOTHIN'.
HEH HEH HEH HEH...
AYE, LAUGH ALL YE WANT, YE FUCKIN' WANKER! D'YE THINK I'D BETRAY FINN COOLEY TO THE LIKESA YOU?
THIS THE SAME FINN COOLEY WHO PISSED OFF AN' LEFT YOU TO IT TONIGHT?
OR D'YOU THINK HE'S COMING TO RESCUE YOU? YEAH, THAT'S PROBABLY IT. PROBABLY BE COMING THROUGH THE DOOR ANY SECOND... NOW...
FUCK AWAY OFF.
OH, A HARD MAN.
EXCEPT THAT'S NOT TRUE, IS IT, PETER?
YOU WERE NEVER ARRESTED. NEVER EVEN INTERROGATED. THE R.U.C. NEVER TOOK YOU UP TO CASTLEREAGH AND GAVE YOU THE HIDING OF YOUR LIFE, THE WAY THEY DID MEN LIKE YOUR UNCLE FINN.
ARE YOU STILL SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO TALK TO US?

FRANK?
GO TO HELL.
YOU'VE GOT TWO BULLETS IN EACH LEG.
GOING TO HAVE TO COME OUT.
YORKIE...?
YANKS AND THEIR BLOODY COFFEE. I'M BRINGING MY OWN TEABAGS NEXT TIME.
AYE.
IS HE REALLY GONNA...?

YOU KNOW WHAT THE BASTARD DID, ANDY.
YEAH, I DO, I DO...IT'S JUST...
FUCK, MAYBE IF I'D SEEN HIM DO IT...
YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME?
NO, IF YOU SAY HE'S THE ONE, I BELIEVE YOU. I KNOW IT'S THE ONLY REASON YOU'D BRING ME, IT'S NOT LIKE YOU ACTUALLY NEED ME HERE.
BUT I MEAN, FUCKIN' TORTURE, YOU KNOW? I JUST--I CAN'T MAKE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SOME FUCKIN' PROVO SNIPER, AN' THE KID IN THERE THIS BLOKE'S GONNA CUT UP...
ANDY, LAD.
YOUR DAD SAVED MY LIFE TWICE, ONCE IN ULSTER, ONCE IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC. I NEVER GOT A CHANCE TO REPAY HIM, AND I THOUGHT THE BEST I COULD DO WAS GIVE HIS SON A GO AT HIS MURDERER.
BUT I TOLD YOU, I CAN'T HAND HIM OVER TO YOU UNTIL I'VE FINISHED MY JOB. MY PRIORITY IS FINN COOLEY--AND UNTIL I SLOT HIM AND CONFIRM HE'S DEAD, THAT LITTLE SHITE IN THERE IS MY ONLY SOURCE OF INTELLIGENCE.
AND WHAT THAT MEANS IS--
JESUS FUCKIN' CHRIST!
ALL RIGHT, LOOK: YOU'RE AN INFANTRYMAN. THIS ISN'T INFANTRY WORK.
GO AND GET YOURSELF A BREATH OF FRESH AIR.

YEAH, IT'S TOMMY'S.
YOU SURE, BRENDA?
YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW THE FINGERS HE STUCK IN ME ALL THE TIMES HE COULDN'T GET IT UP? IT'S HIS.
ALL RIGHT, WHAT'S THE STORY?
IT WAS, UH, IT WAS DELIVERED TO THE CLUB THIS EVENIN'. THERE WASN'T NO NOTE OR NOTHIN', BUT I FIGURED, YOU KNOW, WITH EVERYTHIN' THAT'S BEEN GOIN' ON--
SOMEBODY BLOWS UP THE BAR TOMMY'S IN EVERY NIGHT AN' THEN HE GETS FUCKIN' KIDNAPPED, SO IT MIGHT JUST BE HIS HAND IN THE BOX? YOU'RE A BORN DETECTIVE, GERRY.

YEAH, OKAY, BUT YOU KNOW WHERE IT CAME FROM? I CHECKED THE WAYBILL, RIGHT, AN'--
HELL'S KITCHEN.
HOW--?
THE WORD IS NIGGERS LIFTED HIM OFF THE STREET. THAT MEANS MAGINTY. THAT MEANS THE KITCHEN.
YOU SENT GUYS ROUND TO THE ADDRESS WRITTEN ON THE SLIP, DIDN'T YOU?
IT TURNED OUT TO BE A FAG BAR.
YOU KNOW IT'S TERRIFYIN', THINKIN' I HAVE TO GO UP AGAINST MAGINTY WITH PEOPLE AS STUPID AS YOU.
CALL EVERYONE WE GOT AN' HAVE 'EM MEET US AT THE CLUB. TELL 'EM TO KEEP THE LINES OUT, SEE WHO'S SAYIN' WHAT ABOUT THIS.
WE GOIN' AFTER TOMMY?
WE'RE GOIN' AFTER TEN MILLION DOLLARS.
MAGINTY'S TRYNNA SPOOK US. NESBITT'S WILL IS NO PIPE DREAM--WHICH IS WHAT I TOLD MY ASSHOLE HUSBAND IN THE BEGINNIN'.
ARE YOU GONNA LEAVE THAT FUCKIN' THING THERE FOR MY KIDS TO FIND IN THE MORNIN'?
HUH? OH.
THROW IT IN THE TRASH AN' COME ON.

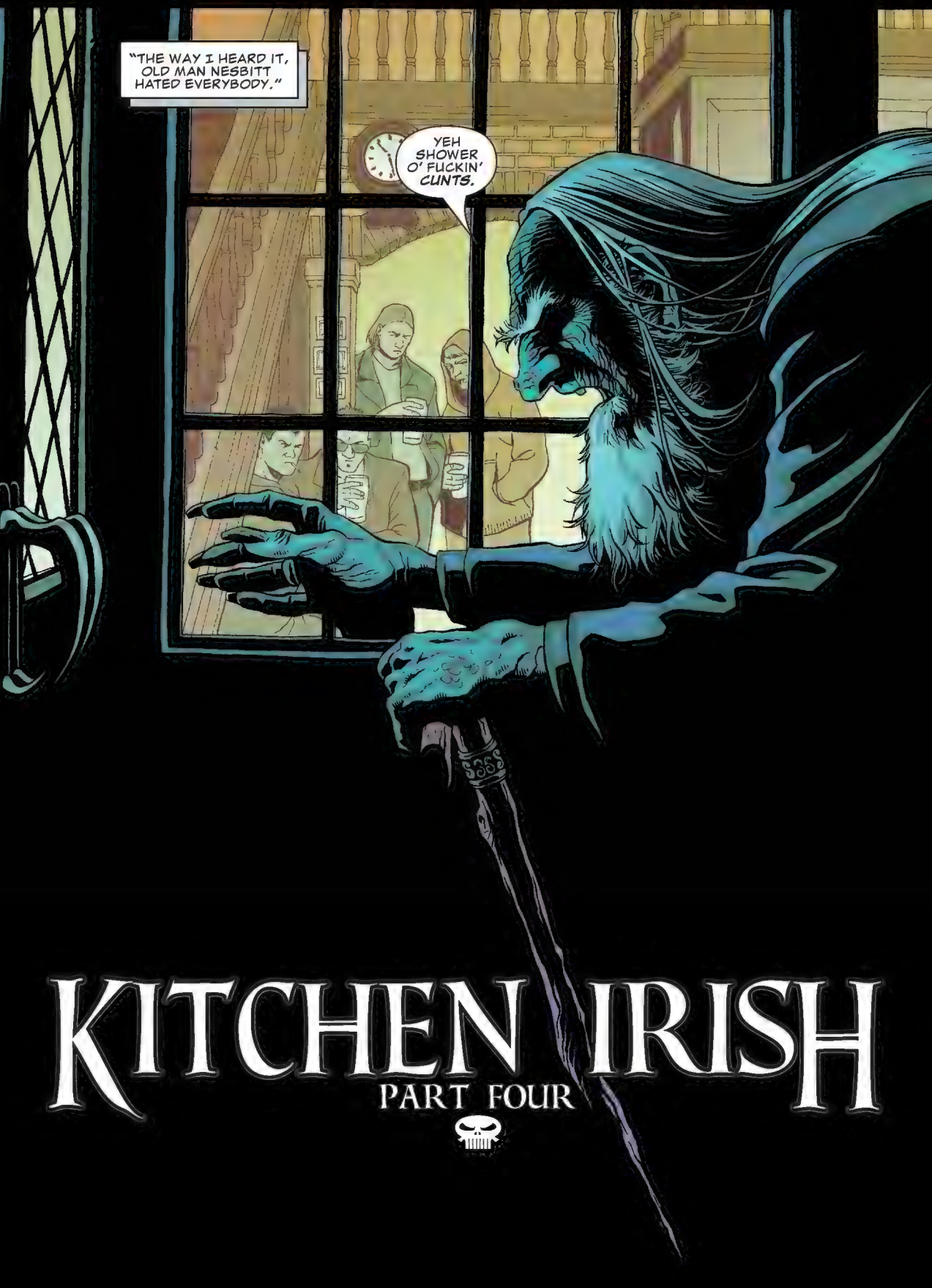
HEAVIER'N YOU'D THINK THERE, ISN'T IT?
LOVELY JOB.
HOW'S HE DOIN' IN THERE, ANYWAY?
THERE'S... NOT MUCH BLOOD LEFT IN HIM.
I DON'T KNOW A LOT ABOUT TYIN' OFF VEINS AN' SO ON. I NEVER HAD TO BEFORE.
I'D ALMOST SAY HE WAS IN SOME KINDA COMA, EXCEPT HIS EYES ARE OPEN. SHOCK, MAYBE. I CAN'T SEE HIM LASTIN' MUCH LONGER.
MISTER MAGINTY...
ISN'T IT ENOUGH YET?
NOT EVEN CLOSE.
GET ON BACK IN THERE AN' TAKE SOMETHIN' ELSE OFF HIM, I WANT SIX OR SEVEN PACKAGES GOIN' OUT TODAY.
WELL-- WHAT'LL I TAKE?
I DUNNO, NAPPER.
SURPRISE ME.

JESUS FUCKIN' CHRIST.
Pedro Box
Large

IT'S ALL ABOUT MONEY.
TEN MILLION DOLLARS, UNCLE FINN SAID.
THERE'S THIS--THERE WAS THIS OUL' LAD, NESBITT HIS NAME WAS. HE'S MEANT TO HAVE LEFT IT IN HIS WILL.
WE WERE GONNA USE IT TO BUY WEAPONS FOR THE STRUGGLE BACK HOME.
UNCLE FINN TELL YOU THAT TOO, DID HE?
WHO ELSE KNOWS ABOUT THIS?
THERE'S SOMEBODY CALLED MAGINTY, I HEARD HIS NAME A LOT. THE RIVER RATS, THEY'RE MEANT TO BE IMPORTANT.
AN' TOMMY TONER, HE'S THE FELLA RUNS THE WESTIES--WE SET THE BOMB IN THE BAR HE DRINKS IN. HE CALLED A MEETIN' THERE WITH EVERYONE TO TRY AN' SORT OUT A DEAL.
SO YOU THOUGHT YOU'D WIPE OUT THE OPPOSITION ALL AT ONCE...FINN BOLLOCKSED IT UP...AND THE BLOODY THING WENT OFF EARLY.
WHAT A GANG-FUCK.
THAT LOT MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU?
SOME.

THE RATS ARE SMALL-TIME, JUST KIDS PLAYING PIRATES. I SAW TONER LIFTED ON FORTY-EIGHTH STREET THE DAY BEFORE YOU ARRIVED.
DON'T KNOW ABOUT MAGINTY.
MICHAEL MORRISON TOLD US THE WESTIES AN' THE RIVER RATS'D BE THERE.
WHERE'S FINN COOLEY NOW?
I DUNNO.
WHAT WAS TONIGHT ABOUT, WERE YOU LOOKING FOR THE REST OF THEM?
THEN YOU BETTER TELL US WHAT YOU DO KNOW.
I'VE NEWS FOR YOU: ALL I DID WAS PULL THE BANDAGES OFF. YOU SCREAMED YOUR HEAD OFF AND PASSED OUT STRAIGHTAWAY.
THAT WAS TWO HOURS AGO.
TELL US EVERYTHING.
UNLESS YOU THINK YOU CAN HANDLE SOME REAL PAIN.
LEANDRO FERNANDEZ '04

N
W
DUBLIN
PURGATORY
LUCKY JACK
HECTOR
-04
TRUNK groceries
HANDO
-GLEASON
tulip
Thirteen
A PERFECT
FOR a better time CALL
Jimmy FRANCIS 11-21
GRIFF
Schon TIME
FRESNO BOB
Rocka-Rolla
NOT GYPSY
DAVID GOBBLE -N- B. MARLEY
MESS KISS
THE TAO OF DONAL
THE LIFE OF IKE
Alonsoap
212/694-
Brits JAM



KITCHEN IRISH

PART FOUR

THAT'S WHAT HE SAID TO *EVERYONE*, NO MATTER WHO THEY WERE. JUST CUNTS, THAT'S ALL HE CALLED THEM.
AN' EVERYONE HATED *HIM*, TOO, HE WAS MEANT TO BE AN EVIL FUCKIN' OUL' BASTARD...
"BUT NO ONE EVER DONE NOTHIN' ABOUT HIM. HE WAS A WESTIE, ONE O' THE ORIGINAL ONES, NOT LIKE TOMMY TONER AN' ALL THEM LOT.
"HE USED TO RUN HELL'S KITCHEN YEARS AGO, BEFORE IT ALL WENT WRONG IN THE EIGHTIES. PEOPLE THOUGHT HE MAYBE STILL HAD POWER-- LIKE HE HAD FAVORS HE COULD CALL IN, FELLAS'D STILL BE WILLIN' TO KILL FOR HIM. NO ONE REALLY KNEW FOR SURE.
"THAT'S WHY THEY WERE ALL A WEE BIT SCAREDA HIM."
LISTEN--
ARE YOUZ GONNA LET ME GO AFTER THIS?
IF I WAS YOU I'D JUST KEEP TALKING, BOY.

AYE.
WELL-- THE THING WAS EVERYONE KNEW HIM, RIGHT? ALL THE ONES WE'VE BEEN TALKIN' ABOUT, THEY ALL HAD SOME SORTA CONNECTION.
"MY UNCLE FINN, HE DID BUSINESS WI' NESBITT. I THINK IT WAS SOME SORTA FUNDRAISIN' THING, OR NESBITT WAS SUPPLYIN' HIM GUNS, I DUNNO.
"THIS WAS BEFORE THE ACCIDENT, LIKE. FINN KNEW HIM WELL, HE'S THE ONE TOLD ME ALLA THIS.
"AN' THERE WAS TOMMY TONER, HE REALLY LOOKED UP TO NESBITT. HE THOUGHT THE OUL' FELLA'D BE PROUDA HIM, 'CAUSE HE WAS KEEPIN' THE WESTIES GOIN'--USIN' THE NAME, ANYWAY.
"I DON'T THINK THAT LASTED VERY LONG.
"I EVEN HEARD THE TWO KIDS WHO STARTED THE RIVER RATS KNEW HIM, I THINK HE WAS THEIR GREAT-UNCLE OR SOMETHIN'. NOT THAT HE TREATED THEM ANY DIFFERENT.
"THEY WEREN'T PIRATES THEN, LIKE, BUT FINN SAID THEY WERE ALWAYS BAD WEE BASTARDS."
AN' THERE WAS THIS BOY MAGINTY, TOO...
HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HIM?

FUCK, NEXT TO NOTHIN'. FINN SAYS HE'S A BLACK FELLA GREW UP IN DUBLIN, CAME OVER HERE WHEN HE WAS YOUNGER.
I THINK HE'S MAYBE A BIT OF A HEADCASE...
IF HE GREW UP BLACK IN DUBLIN, HE'S GOT TO BE HARD AS NAILS.
GO ON.
RIGHT, WELL LIKE I SAY, THIS OUL' FUCKER HATED EVERYONE-- MADE THEM ALL NERVOUS, SHOWER O' CUNTS, ALL THAT. SO LAST YEAR HE DIED, HE WAS ABOUT NINETY-FIVE OR SOMETHIN', AN' EVERYONE BREATHED A BIG FUCKIN' SIGH O' RELIEF...
"AN' THEN FINN GOT THIS LETTER.
"IT WAS FROM A LAWYER IN NEW YORK, A FELLA NESBITT HIRED. IT JUST SHOWS YE HOW MUCH THE OUL' BOY KNEW, IF HE COULD GET A MESSAGE TO FINN UP IN CANADA.
"IT SAID THAT NESBITT WANTED FINN TO HAVE A SHARE IN HIS WILL, WHICH WAS MEANT TO BE DIVIDED UP BETWEEN HIM, MAGINTY, TOMMY TONER AN' THE RIVER RATS. EVERYONE'S LETTER HAD PARTA A CODE IN IT--PUT THEM TOGETHER, YE'D GET THE LOCATION WHERE THE MONEY WAS.
"AN' THE MONEY WAS TEN MILLION DOLLARS."
FINN BELIEVED THAT?
HE THOUGHT IT WAS JUST ABOUT POSSIBLE. NESBITT WAS RUNNIN' GUNS AN' DRUGS AN' GOD KNOWS WHAT FOR FIFTY OR SIXTY YEARS; THERE WAS ALL SORTSA RUMORS ABOUT HOW MUCH MONEY HE MADE.
AN' HE WAS A STINGY OUL' MISER TOO, APPARENTLY. FINN SAID HE'D ARGUE OVER THE PRICE'VE A PINT.

I HEARD THIS ONE STORY HE KEPT ALL HIS MONEY IN A MATTRESS, THOUSANDS AN' THOUSANDSA DOLLARS--
WHAT'D HE WANT FINN AN' THEM TO HAVE IT FOR? IF HE HATED THEM ALL SO MUCH?
"THE LETTER SAID HE WAS SICK AN' TIREDA THE WAY THEY WERE CARRYIN' ON.
"ROBBIN' PEOPLE LIKE THE RATS, TONER RUNNIN' HIS RACKETS, MY UNCLE TRADIN' DRUGS FOR GUNS, WHATEVER MAGINTY WAS UP TO--NESBITT THOUGHT THIS WAS DESTROYIN' HELL'S KITCHEN. AN' THEY'D PICKED IT UP FROM HIM, SO HE THOUGHT IT WAS HIS FAULT.
"HE WANTED THEM TO TAKE HIS MONEY AN' NEVER COME BACK. THEY'D'VE MORE'N ENOUGH THAT THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO RIP INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD ANYMORE. HE WAS AN OLD MAN, HE WAS DYIN', HE THOUGHT HE SHOULD SET THINGS RIGHT.
"HE SAID HE WANTED THIS TO BE HIS LEGACY."
THEN WE GOT ANOTHER MESSAGE--TOMMY TONER THIS TIME, WANTIN' EVERYONE IN FOR A SIT-DOWN. GAVE US A TIME AN' PLACE AN' EVERYTHING.
THAT WHEN FINN DECIDED TO BOMB THE MEETING?
TEN MILLION GOES A FUCKSIGHT FURTHER'N TWO AN' A HALF.
FUCK, TONER WAS PROBABLY GONNA KILL EVERYONE THAT SHOWED UP. ALL FINN WAS TRYNNA DO WAS BEAT HIM TO IT.

AN' THEN WHEN THEY WERE ALL OUTTA THE WAY, WE'D FIND THE LAWYER AN' GET THE FULL CODE OUTTA HIM...UH...
WHERE'RE YOUZ ALL GOIN'?
TO TALK ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT TO SLOT YOU.
WHAT?
YOU JUST SIT THERE AND THINK ABOUT YOUR CHANCES.
TRUTH?
AS HE BELIEVES IT.
PROBLEM I HAVE IS WITH NESBITT.
WHAT, WHERE HE MELLOWS IN HIS AUTUMN YEARS AND DECIDES TO ACT FOR THE GOOD OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD?
THE NEIGHBORHOOD OLD MAN NESBITT KNEW WAS GONE LONG BEFORE HE CHECKED OUT. AND ONCE A BASTARD, ALWAYS A BASTARD.
SO WHAT WAS HE REALLY THINKING?

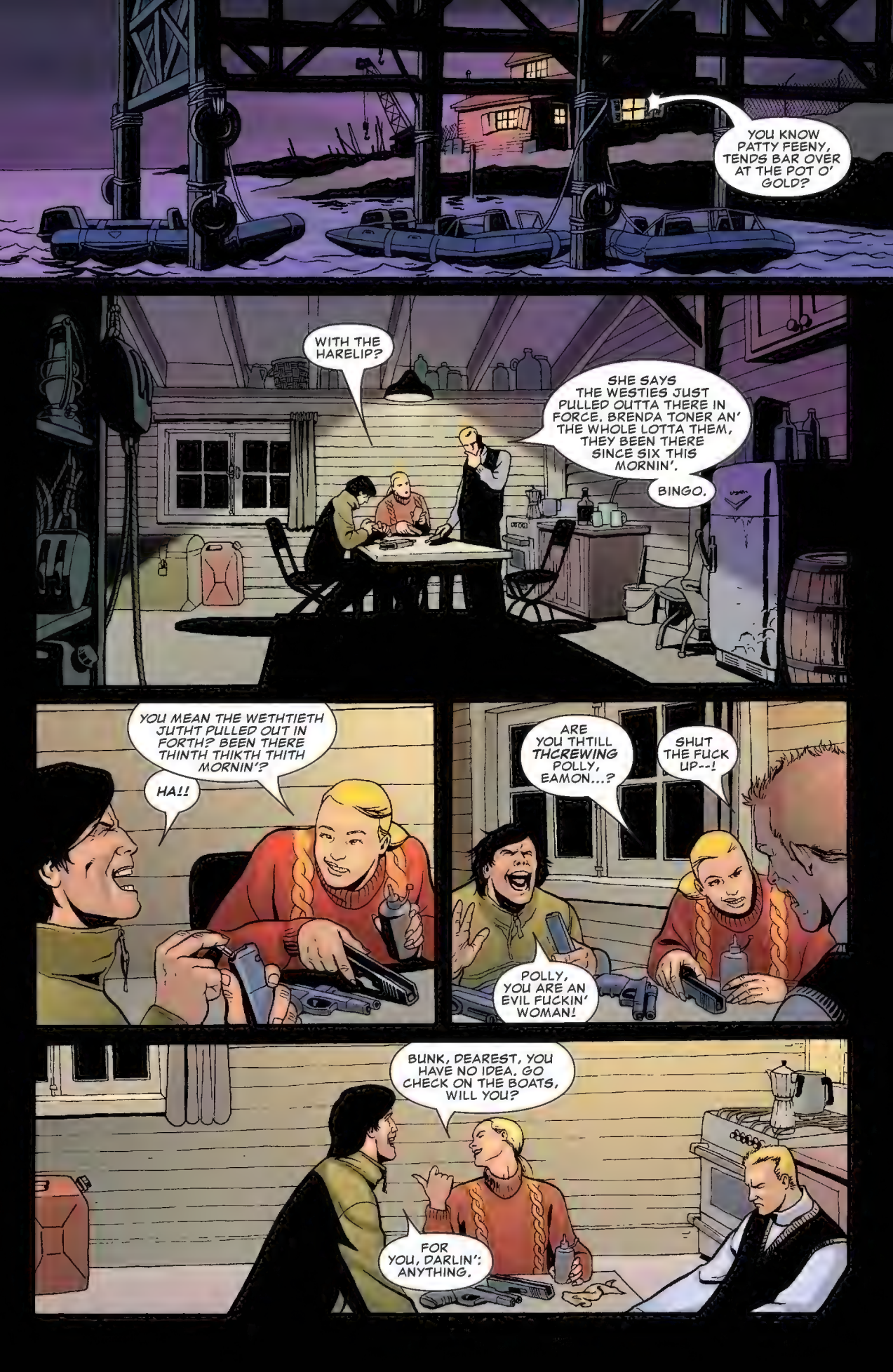
The Pot O'Gold
'FRAID THERE WAS A COUPLE MORE DELIVERIES BEFORE YOU GOT HERE.
OH JESUS, IT'S MORE OF FUCKIN' TOMMY...!
MM.
BRENDA, YOU--YOU THINK THERE'S ANY CHANCE HE'S STILL ALIVE?
WELL, IF HE IS, HE'S HOPPIN' EVERYWHERE AN' SITTIN' DOWN TO PISS. WHO DO I GOTTA FUCK TO GET A BAGEL AROUND HERE?
UH, GERRY? MRS. TONER?
THE BOYS'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT THE FUCK'S GOIN' ON...

YOU MEAN THEY'RE ALL SCARED SHITLESS, RIGHT?
WELL--
MEN ARE SUCH FUCKIN' FAGGOTS.
ALL RIGHT, LISTEN UP.
FOR ANYONE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT'S IN THOSE BOXES, IT'S BITS OF TOMMY TONER'S BODY. THAT MEANS HE'S DEAD AN' I'M RUNNIN' THE WESTIES, AN' IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT YOU CAN FUCKIN' EAT ME.
NOW I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ALL THINKIN': WHOA, SENDIN' SOMEONE'S SCALP AN' DICK AN' ARM SAME-DAY DELIVERY, THAT'S FUCKED UP. THAT'S SCARY. WHOEVER'S DOIN' THIS, IT AIN'T SOMEONE WE EVER WANNA FUCK WITH.
BULL. SHIT. BULL FUCKIN' SHIT. ANYONE COULD DO THIS, ABSOLUTELY ANYONE, AN' GETTIN' YOU ALL SPOOKED LIKE THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANNA FUCKIN' DO...
IT AIN'T THE BOGEYMAN OUT THERE, IT'S JUST ANOTHER HUMAN FUCKIN' BEIN'. IT'S THAT CRAZY FUCKIN' JUNGLE BUNNY MAGINTY, IF YOU REALLY WANNA KNOW.
LOTTA MONEY AT STAKE HERE. WE ALL KEEP OUR HEADS AN' DON'T LET THIS COCKSUCKER GET TO US, WE'RE GONNA HAVE THE PAYDAY OF THE CENTURY. WE FUCK IT UP--
WE'RE GONNA BE SEEIN' EACH OTHER'S FUCKIN' FACES FOR THE RESTA OUR FUCKIN' LIVES.
THINK ABOUT IT.

WHY DON'T THEY CALL A TRUCE?
ALL THESE WESTIES AN' RIVER RATS AN' THAT, WHY DON'T THEY KNOCK THE GANGSTER STUFF ON THE HEAD 'TIL AFTER THEY GET THE MONEY?
THEY HATE EACH OTHER.
GROWING UP LIKE THEY DID, TRUST IS JUST A THING THAT GETS YOU KILLED.
KIND OF A SHAME. BE GOOD TO HAVE THEM ALL IN ONE PLACE.
THINKING OF SETTING THEM UP?
I'VE GOT THE NUMBER FOR A CLUB TONER RUNS. BY NOW EVERYONE'LL HAVE THEIR LINES OUT; IF THE WESTIES MAKE A MOVE THE OTHERS'LL FOLLOW THEM.
SO.
WHERE'S A GOOD PLACE FOR A FIREFIGHT?
FUCKING HELL.

THAT WAS MAGINTY.
WHAT?
SAYS HE'S GOT TOMMY.
SAYS HE'LL TRADE HIM BACK TO US FOR OUR PART OF THE CODE.
HORSESHIT, HOW THE FUCK COULD HE STILL BE ALIVE?
HE... COULD BE...
AND HOW DO YOU KNOW IT WAS MAGINTY?
HE SAID HE GRABBED TOMMY ON FORTY-EIGHTH STREET, THREE DAYS AGO. WHITE VAN, TWO SHOTGUNNERS, HE KNEW EVERY DETAIL.
BRENDA, THIS COULD BE A CHANCE TO GET YOUR HUSBAND BACK...
COULD BE A CHANCE TO KILL THAT NIGGER BASTARD, AN' GET HIS PARTA THE CODE. WHERE AN' WHEN?
MIDNIGHT. PIER EIGHTY-SIX.
LET'S MAKE SURE WE'RE THERE EARLY.
...WAIT A MINUTE, EIGHTY-SIX?
ISN'T THAT THE INTREPID?

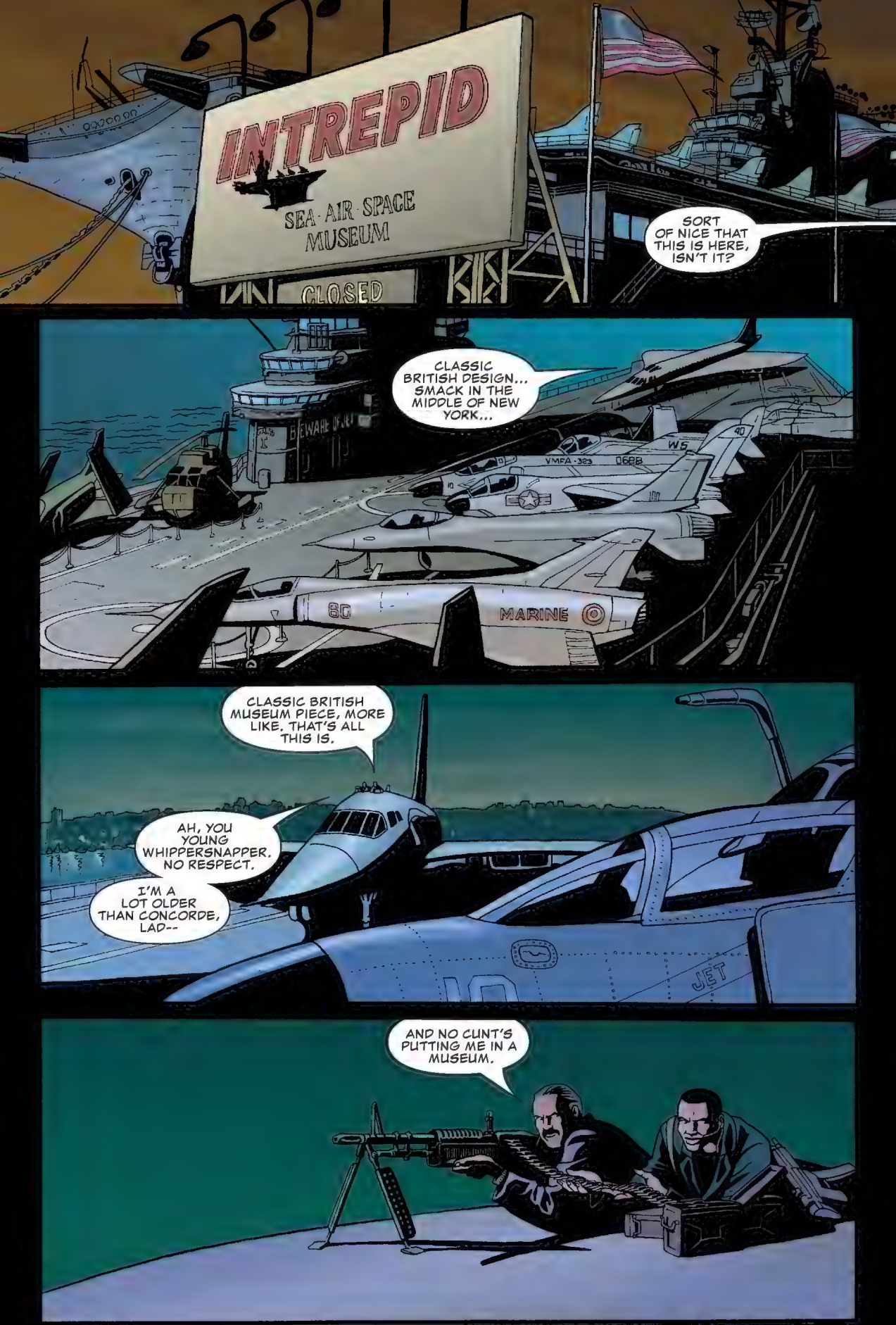
ARE YOU STILL GIRNIN' ON ABOUT THAT?
IT'S FUCKIN' SORE, ALL RIGHT?
AYE, WELL, DIRTY BLACK FUCKERS.
THEY COULDA KILLED US, FINN. WE'RE LUCKY THEY SAW YOUR FACE AN' RAN OFF--
SORRY...
YE'RE NO FUCKIN' OIL PAINTIN' YERSELF, MICHAEL!
HHHH.
LAST TIME I GO ANYWHERE IN THIS CITY WITHOUT A GUN, I'M TELLIN' YE THAT.
HERE--!
LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE ON THE MOVE...
DIDN'T I TELL YE THIS WAS A GOOD IDEA?
GET AFTER THEM.


YOU KNOW PATTY FEENY, TENDS BAR OVER AT THE POT O' GOLD?
WITH THE HARELIP?
SHE SAYS THE WESTIES JUST PULLED OUTTA THERE IN FORCE. BRENDA TONER AN' THE WHOLE LOTTA THEM, THEY BEEN THERE SINCE SIX THIS MORNIN'.
BINGO.
YOU MEAN THE WETHTIETH JUTHT PULLED OUT IN FORTH? BEEN THERE THINTH THIKTH THITH MORNIN'?
HA!!
ARE YOU THTILL THCREWING POLLY, EAMON...?
SHUT THE FUCK UP--!
POLLY, YOU ARE AN EVIL FUCKIN' WOMAN!
BUNK, DEAREST, YOU HAVE NO IDEA. GO CHECK ON THE BOATS, WILL YOU?
FOR YOU, DARLIN': ANYTHING.

HE'S NOT RIGHT FOR YOU.
MM?
I SAID--
I HEARD YOU, JESUS, YOU THINK I'M INTERESTED IN *BUNK?* HE'S A USEFUL IDIOT, SURE, BUT YOU THINK I'D EVER WANNA FUCK HIM?
THANKS FOR LOOKIN' OUT FOR ME, BIG BROTHER. I THINK I GOT THIS ONE UNDER CONTROL.
POLLY, I *ALWAYS* LOOKED OUT FOR YOU. I WAS ALWAYS THERE FOR YOU, EVERY SINGLE TIME, NO MATTER WHAT...
YEAH?
WHERE WERE YOU WHEN DA USED TO COME HOME DRUNK, WITH A BIG FUCKIN' HARD-ON STICKIN' OUTTA HIS PANTS?
WE'VE GOT OUR OWN PEOPLE INSIDE THE WESTIES. THEY'LL LET US KNOW WHERE BRENDA'S GOIN', THEN WE CAN GET MOVIN'.
SOONER THE BETTER, REALLY.
WE MAKE A SCORE LIKE THIS ONE, WE CAN FORGET ALL THAT PIRATE BULLSHIT FOR GOOD.

WHY WON'T YOU DIE?
WHY WON'T YOU JUST FUCKIN' DIE?
MAN'S A FIGHTER, ALL RIGHT.
LOOK, MISTER MAGINTY, THIS--
BILLY?

AAAAAAHH! AAAAAAAAHH!!
BILLY!!
BILLY, COME BACK! COME BACK TO GRANDAD! PLEASE!!
AW, NAPPER...!
DON'T YOU WANT HIM TO SEE ONE OF HELL'S KITCHEN'S LEGENDS IN ACTION?
WANT HIM TO SEE? WHAT--
WHAT KINDA FUCKIN' MONSTER ARE YOU...?
THAT'S RICH, COMIN' FROM SOMEONE'S BEEN CUTTIN' A MAN TO PIECES FOR THE LAST TWO DAYS.
GOOD NEWS: YOU'RE NEARLY DONE HERE. I NEED ONE MORE BIT OFFA TOMMY, FOR A MEETIN' I JUST GOT WIND OF--THEN YOU CAN GO ON HOME.
I'M DYIN' TO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOIN' TO SAY TO LITTLE BILLY'S MOTHER...

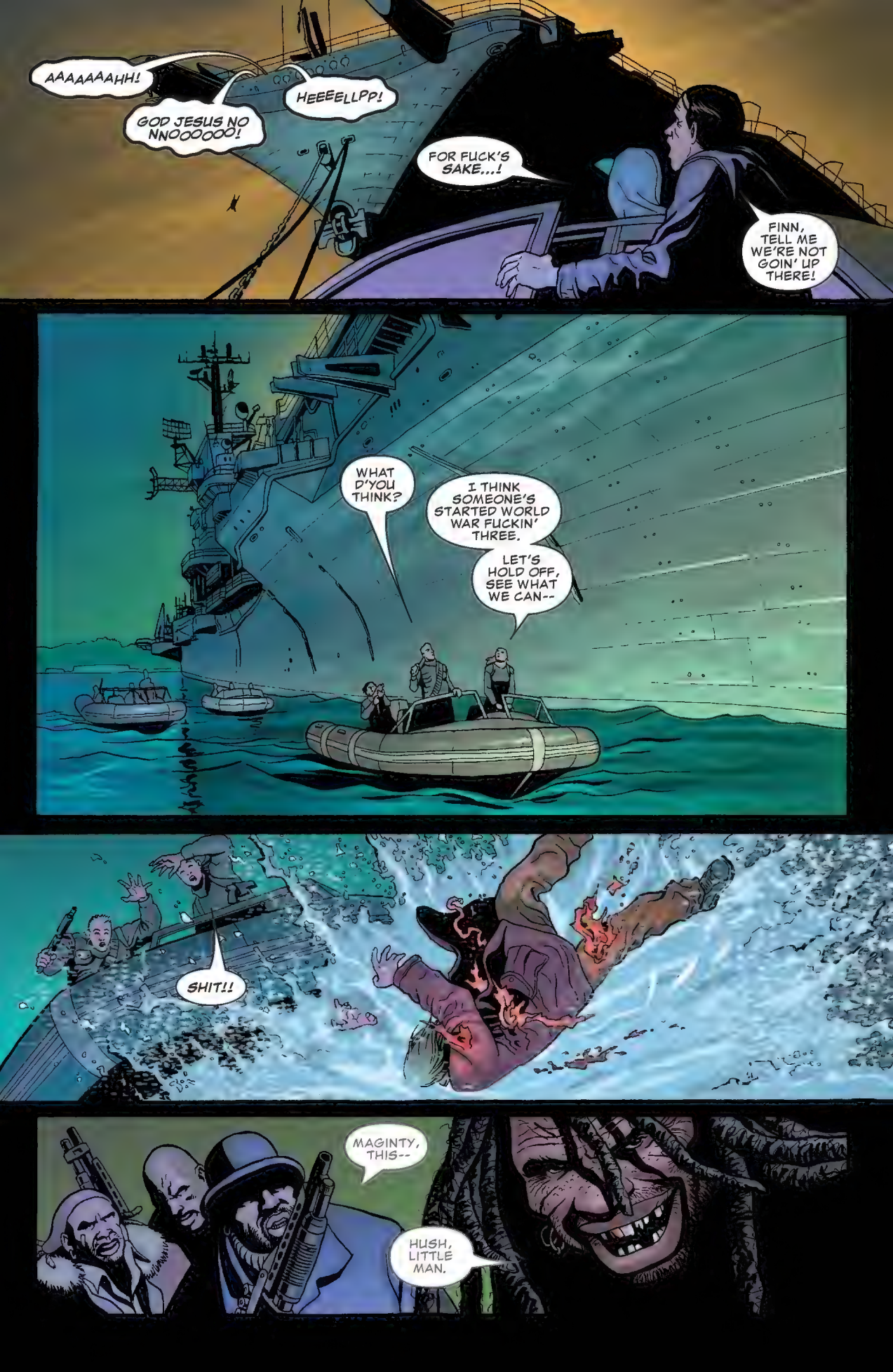

INTREPID
SEA · AIR · SPACE
MUSEUM
CLOSED
SORT OF NICE THAT THIS IS HERE, ISN'T IT?
CLASSIC BRITISH DESIGN... SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF NEW YORK...
BEWARE OF JET
VMFA-323
MARINE
CLASSIC BRITISH MUSEUM PIECE, MORE LIKE. THAT'S ALL THIS IS.
AH, YOU YOUNG WHIPPERSNAPPER. NO RESPECT.
I'M A LOT OLDER THAN CONCORDE, LAD--
JET
AND NO CUNT'S PUTTING ME IN A MUSEUM.

WHERE IS HE, ANYWAY?
HE'S THERE.
ELEVEN-THIRTY; THESE BOYS ARE CUTTING IT FINE IF THEY WANT TO GET THE JUMP ON ANYONE COMING AT MIDNIGHT...
MARINES
HERE WE GO.
FRANK?
YEAH.
WHAT NOW?
NOW WE LOOK AT ALL THE PRETTY AIRPLANES.
SPREAD THE FUCK OUT AN' HIDE, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE...!
WANT TO SEE WHO ELSE TURNS UP?
THEY MAKE IT IN AMONG THE AIRCRAFT THEY'LL BE HARDER TO GET AT.
GOING NOW.
BEEN A LONG, LONG TIME--

SINCE I KILLED PEOPLE FROM A HUEY.
Melody II
EY UP YOU FUCKING BASTARDS--

JESUS FUCK!
WHAT'S FUCKIN'-- WHAT--
AAAAAAAAHHH!!
ALLA YOU GET YOUR FUCKIN' DOWN!!
LEADER.
AYE, WE'LL GET HER.
WATCH AND LEARN, LAD!
WHAT?!
WORK THE FLANKS! DON'T LET THEM SCATTER!
FIRST THE LEFT--
THEN THE RIGHT--
AND IF YOU SEE ANYONE GIVING ORDERS, THEY'D BE WELL WORTH A FUCKING BURST!

SHOOT BACK YOU FAAAAAAAAHH!!
YOU'RE HERDING THEM, SEE--
YOU'RE PUSHING THEM INTO THE REST OF YOUR FORCE--
SOMEBODY FUCKIN' HELP US!
FUCK NO!
AND THE ONLY WAY THEY CAN TURN IS BACK TO YOU...
JESUS CHRIST, WOULD YOU FUCKIN' LOOK AT HIM GO!
YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN HIM WHEN HE WAS YOUR AGE, IN VIETNAM.
LOVELY FUCKING GRUB.


AAAAAAAHH!
HEEEELLPP!
GOD JESUS NO NNOOOOOO!
FOR FUCK'S SAKE...!
FINN, TELL ME WE'RE NOT GOIN' UP THERE!
WHAT D'YOU THINK?
I THINK SOMEONE'S STARTED WORLD WAR FUCKIN' THREE.
LET'S HOLD OFF, SEE WHAT WE CAN--
SHIT!!
MAGINTY, THIS--
HUSH, LITTLE MAN.

HUSH.
LEANDRO FERNANDEZ '04

PUNISHER #11

KITCHEN IRISH

PART FIVE

AIR ONE-FIVE FROM DISPATCH, WE HAVE MOBILE UNITS ON THEIR WAY, E.T.A. ONE MINUTE--DO YOU REQUIRE TACTICAL SUPPORT, OVER?
AH, DISPATCH, WE--OH, SHIT!
DISPATCH, YES! AFFIRMATIVE! WE NEED TACTICAL!
FRANK, WE CAN'T GET CAUGHT HERE...
I KNOW. GET MOVING, I'LL SEE YOU DOWN ON THE WATER.
FINN--!
I SEE THEM.
LET'S WAIT IN THE MOTOR HERE, I WANNA SEE HOW THIS TURNS OUT...

BRENDA--!
HELP ME, YOU STUPID BASTARD!
THOUGHT THE COPS'D SHOW UP SOONER THAN THIS.
WOULD'VE LIKED TO GET THE OTHERS, BUT THREE DOZEN WESTIES IS A GOOD NIGHT'S WORK.
ONE MORE MAG-- THEN QUIT.
HERE'S ONE SCALP I DIDN'T EXPECT TO BE TAKIN'...
MAGINTY...!
HE CAN'T HEAR SHIT. THERE'S A WAR GOIN' ON, HE DIDN'T EVEN HEAR US GETTIN' UP HERE.
GIMME A GRENADE AN' LET'S MAKE SOME MOTHERFUCKIN' HISTORY...
OKAY--

AAAAAAAAAAHH!!
TOO AMBITIOUS, MAGINTY.
TOO FUCKIN' AMBITIOUS.
COULD'VE DONE WITHOUT THAT.
GAVE THESE PRICKS THE SPACE THEY NEEDED.
THEY DON'T CARE IF TAC TEAMS ARE MINUTES AWAY--

THEY'RE AT FULL AUTO, DRUNK ON THE POWER OF IT.
FALLEN IN LOVE WITH THEIR GUNS.
WE GOT YOUR ASS, YOU MOTHERLESS SHIT-EATIN' FUCK!
AW--
STROKE OF LUCK.
TIME I WAS GONE.

BRENDA, COME ON!
I BEEN SHOT, YOU ASSHOLE!
HEY!!
WHA--
JESUS!
T
T
TOMMY?
AAAAH, FUCK!
AAAAAAAHH!
MAGINTY'S HERE!
MAGINTY--
FUCKIN' EAT US--
YOU COCKSUCKER, GERRY, HE WANTS THIS...!

YEAH, GERRY, WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU THINKIN'?
...EVENIN', BRENDA.
YOUR PARTA THE CODE OR I'LL STICK THIS FROM YOUR SNATCH TO YOUR THROAT.
I'M NOT AFRAIDA YER PATHETIC FUCKIN' PRICK--
HA!!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!
SHIT!
--IN THE AIR! MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO MOVE OR YOU WILL BE FIRED UPON!
SHIT...!

YOU LITTLE MAGGOT--
DAMMIT--
16369
FUCKIN' WONDERFUL.
COPS'RE ALL OVER THE PLACE UP THERE.
WE AIN'T GETTIN' SHIT TONIGHT, POLL, WE AIN'T GETTIN' NOBODY'S CODE...
HEY!
THAT'S THAT MOTHERFUCKER--!
BUNK, NO! AND KEEP YOUR FUCKIN' VOICE DOWN--
CONTACT.

FUCK!
AAAAAAAH!
JESUS--
SHIT--
FUCKIN'--
HE'S GONNA GET US--!
OVER THE SIDE--
OTHERS-- PICK YOU UP--
FUCK THAT, WE'LL BE SITTIN' DUCKS IN THE WATER!
NOT-- NOT WITH ME IN THE WAY.
GO NOW.
BUNK, YOU CAN'T--
YES, BUNK, YES! PLEASE!
I LOVE YOU, BUNK! I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU!
I ALWAYS LOVED YOU...!

NEED A LIFT HOME THERE, BRENDA?
OR ARE YE WAITIN' ON A BETTER OFFER?
FINN FUCKIN' COOLEY?!
OLD ANGUS
COME ON, MOTHERFUCKERS! COME ON!
WHAT'RE YOU FUCKIN' WAITIN' FOR?!
POLLYYYYYY!
STUPID FUCKIN' ASSHOLE.
WHERE ARE THOSE IDIOTS...?

...WEARIN' THE MOTHERFUCKERS DOWN, FOOL, THE ODDS AIN'T SO SHITTY ALL OF A SUDDEN!
YEAH, BUT--
JUST LEAVE THE THINKIN' TO ME, OKAY? ONE OF THESE PRICKS IS GONNA BREAK SOON, JUST GO BLOW YOUR FUCKIN' BOYFRIEND OR SOMETHIN'...
♫♫♫♫♫
♫♫♫♫♫
UNNHH!!

THOUGHT WE WERE GONNA GET 'EM ALL?
WE DID ENOUGH.
BRENDA TONER'S OUT OF CANNON FODDER.
COOLEY HAD NO ONE ELSE TO BEGIN WITH.
MAGINTY AND THE RATS DON'T HAVE THE NUMBERS, OR THEY'D'VE HIT THE WESTIES HEAD-ON AT THE START.
THEY'RE OUT OF OPTIONS, ANDY. ONCE THEY TWIG THEY CAN'T FIGHT FOR THE CODE, THEY'LL START TO GET DESPERATE.
MIGHT HAVE TO TRY THAT TRUCE YOU TALKED ABOUT...
THAT'S WHEN THEY'RE EASY MEAT.
NECK YOUR SARNIE AND GET SOME SHUT-EYE, MATE.
I'M GOING TO LOOK IN ON LAUGHING BOY.
HELLO, HELLO.
OH, JESUS CHRIST.
JUST GO ON AN' FUCKIN' GET IT OVER WITH.

DOES SIR HAVE A COMPLAINT ABOUT THE SERVICE?
AYE, GO ON, LAUGH AT ME. JUST A BIG BLOODY JOKE TO YOU, ISN'T IT?
YE LEAVE ME ROTTIN' IN THIS HOLE, WONDERIN' WHEN YE'RE COMIN' IN TO KILL ME. EVERY FUCKIN' MOMENT'S LIKE TORTURE.
EVIL, INHUMAN BASTARD. TYPICAL FUCKIN' BRIT.
YOU START A WAR AND THEN YOU WHINE ABOUT THE WAY WE FIGHT IT.
TYPICAL FUCKING PADDY.
WE NEVER BLOODY STARTED IT!
YOU PUT A BOMB IN A BAR.
IT WAS A FUCKIN' ACCIDENT, I *TOLD YE* IT WASN'T MEANT TO GO OFF WHEN IT DID! AN' THAT MONEY'S VITAL TO OUR CAUSE, WE DO WHAT WE HAVE TO DO TO--
GROW UP. FINN WOULDN'T SPEND THE MONEY ON THAT BOLLOCKS ANY MORE THAN I WOULD.
LOOK, WHAT'RE YOU FUCKIN' DOIN' TO ME?!
WOULDN'T WANT YOU CALLING AMNESTY ON US.

ne Pot O' Gold
STRAIGHT THROUGH THE MEAT, BY THE LOOKA THINGS, MISSED YER HIP BONE BY A GOOD TWO INCHES.
DOESN'T FEEL LIKE IT FUCKIN' MISSED...
YE'RE LUCKY YE'VE MORE MEAT THAN HIP.
'COURSE, YE ALWAYS DID'VE A QUARE BIG ARSE ON YE--
DIDN'T YE, BRENDA?!
HEY!!
FUCKIN' COCKSUCKER! C'MERE, YOU DICKLESS PIECE A' SHIT!!
SURE WHAT'RE YE GONNA DO TO ME? YE GONNA GET YER BOYS TO KNOCK THE FUCK OUTTA ME?
FELLAS! C'MON! LOOK, I'M STANDIN' RIGHT HERE!
WHAT, ARE YEZ GIVIN' ME A HEAD START, OR SOMETHIN'?
I'VE A NASTY FEELIN' YE'VE RUN OUTTA WESTIES...
WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU WANT, COOLEY?

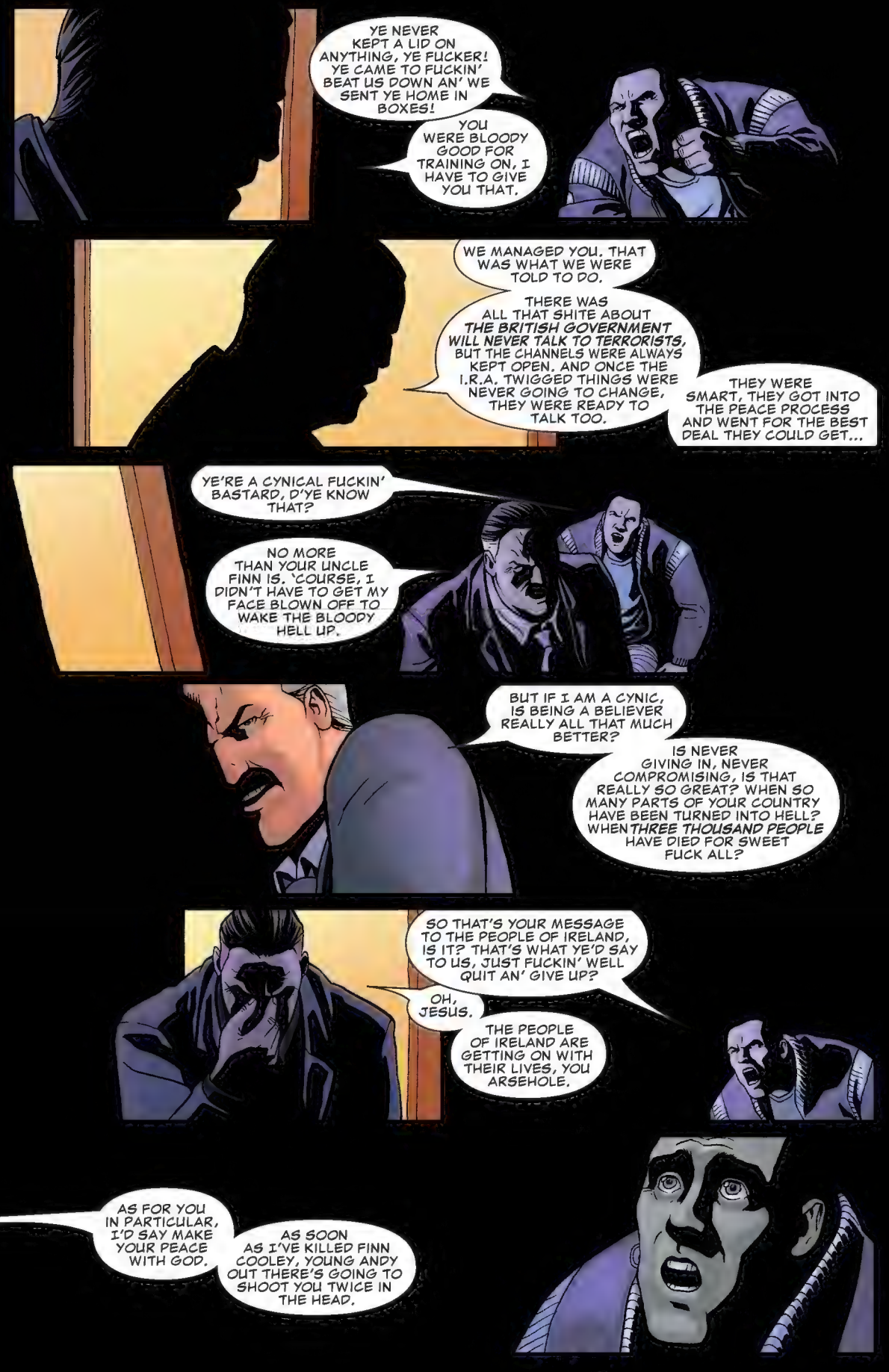
ALL RIGHT, LISTEN.
WE'VE BEEN HACKIN' AWAY AT EACH OTHER, EVERYONE TRYNNA TAKE EVERYONE ELSE OUTTA THE GAME, AN' IT ISN'T WORKIN'. YOU'VE LOST YER HUSBAND AN' YER CREW, AN' YE DON'T GIVE A FUCK--I BET I COULD TAKE A BLACK AN' DECKER TO YER KNEECAPS, AN' YE STILL WOULDN'T GIVE UP THE CODE. THE REST'VE US ARE EXACTLY THE SAME.
ALL WE'VE DONE IS MAKE SURE THERE'S COPS ALL OVER HELL'S KITCHEN, THERE ISN'T ROOM FOR US TO BREATHE...
WE'RE RUNNIN' OUTTA TIME HERE. WE'VE GOTTA GET NESBITT'S MONEY BEFORE WE'RE LIFTED BY THE POLICE OR SHOT DEAD.
I MEAN IT'S *OURS*, BRENDA, IT'S SITTIN' THERE FOR THE FUCKIN' TAKIN'...
NO ONE'S GOT A BETTER CLAIM TO IT THAN I DO.
THE NUMBER A' TIMES I SAT THERE WITH ***NESBITT*** SLIDIN' HIS SWEATY FUCKIN' CLAW UP MY SKIRT--TOMMY JUST SMILIN' LIKE AN IDIOT, TOO SCARED TO DO SHIT ABOUT IT.
STINKIN', DISGUSTIN', DIRTY OLD ***FUCKER***, WHEN I THINK ABOUT WHAT I HAD TO PUT UP WITH...
WE ***ALL*** HAD TO PUT UP WI' HIM. STAGGERIN' ROUND THE PLACE, SPITTIN' AT US--***SHOWER O' CUNTS, SHOWER O' CUNTS, SHOWER O' CUNTS!*** AN' WE ALL FUCKIN' TOOK IT, 'CAUSE WE NEVER KNEW WHAT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO TO US.
SO LET'S GET HIS BLOODY MONEY. LET'S HAVE WHAT WE'RE DUE. AN' THEN LET'S GO AN' TAKE THE ***BIGGEST FUCKIN' SHITE*** YE EVER SAW ON THAT EVIL OUL' BASTARD'S GRAVE...
DON'T GO GETTIN' SENTIMENTAL ON ME, COOLEY. IF WE DO THIS IT'S A ONE-OFF.
I KNOW YOU; YOU'D FUCK OVER YOUR OWN FIRST-BORN IF YOU THOUGHT THERE WAS FIVE CENTS IN IT.
AW, TWO PEAS IN A POD, BRENDA. THAT'S YOU AN' ME.
JESUS FUCKIN' CHRIST.
DON'T TELL ME IT'S LOVE.

YOU REMEMBER THE TIME WE WALKED ACROSS THE HUDSON?
NO...
YEAH YOU DO. WHEN WE WERE KIDS. THAT ONE WINTER, IT GOT SO COLD THE RIVER FROZE.
WE TOOK THE A-TRAIN TO FORT TRYON PARK AN' WE WALKED ACROSS THE ICE. WE MADE IT THE WHOLE FUCKIN' WAY...
YOU WERE THE BRAVEST, POLL.
YOU WALKED WAY OUT AHEAD, ALL ON YOUR OWN, AN' THE ICE WAS CREAKIN' AN' GROANIN' AN' ALL THE OTHER KIDS TURNED BACK--AN' YOU KEPT GOIN'.
I'D NEVERA HAD THE BALLS FOR IT IF YOU HADN'T GONE FIRST, YOU KNOW THAT?
BUT YOU DID, AN' I FOLLOWED YOU. JUST THE TWO'VE US, WE MADE IT RIGHT THE WAY ACROSS.
YOU AN' ME, POLLY.
IT WAS ALWAYS YOU AN' ME.
HERE.
DON'T WANT THAT GETTIN' INFECTED.
FUCK!!

YOUR SHOULDER'S BROKEN. YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO WEAR A SLING.
UH... POLLY?
LOOK, THIS ISN'T WHAT WE--
YOU CAN FUCK OFF HOME ANY TIME YOU WANT, SEAN.
SEE WHAT I HAVE TO PUT UP WITH?
THOSE ASSHOLES AIN'T WORTH SHIT NEXT TO OUR ORIGINAL CREW. AND *THEY* WEREN'T WORTH SHIT, OR THEY'DA HAD THE BRAINS NOT TO FUCK WITH THE PUNISHER.
YOU'RE ALL I GOT, EAMON. WITHOUT YOU I DON'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST MAGINTY AN' THE OTHER FUCKS.
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE MY BROTHER. ACT LIKE IT. HELP ME OUT HERE.
GET YOUR FUCKIN' HEAD STRAIGHT AN' NO MORE TRIPS DOWN MEMORY LANE, UNDERSTAND?
KING OLMEDO
Y...YEAH...
SOON AS IT'S DARK WE'RE OUTTA HERE.

WHAT IS IT YOU WANT, ANYWAY?
DUNNO.
CURIOUS, MAYBE.
I WAS THINKING...I'VE BEEN FIGHTING YOUR LOT FOR THIRTY YEARS. FIRST WITH THE REGIMENT, THEN GOING AROUND TIDYING UP PEOPLE LIKE YOUR UNCLE, JUST TO KEEP THE PEACE PROCESS ON THE RAILS.
I SUPPOSE I'M WONDERING IF THE LATEST GENERATION OF PROVO'S ANY DIFFERENT TO THE REST.
I'M NOT IN THE PROVISIONALS ANYMORE.
NO, YOU'RE NOT. WHAT ARE YOU, CONTINUITY I.R.A.? REAL I.R.A.?
TEN-MILLION-DOLLARS-WORTH-OF-PLASTIC-SURGERY-FOR-FINN-COOLEY I.R.A., IS THAT IT?
YE CAN SNEER ALL YE WANT--
COME ON, DON'T BE A WANKER.
WHAT IS IT PISSES YOU OFF MORE: UNCLE FINN HAVING FEET OF CLAY, OR YOU BEING THE LAST ONE TO REALIZE IT?
BUT YOU'RE RIGHT, I CAN SNEER ALL I WANT. I'M NOT THE ONE WITH THE ALL-CONSUMING SACRED CAUSE.
I THOUGHT YE SAID YE'D BEEN FIGHTIN' US FOR THIRTY YEARS. WHAT'S THAT IF IT'S NOT A BLOODY CAUSE?
A JOB, YOU DICKHEAD.
I'M A BRITISH SOLDIER, I'LL FIGHT ANY CUNT WHO TRIES IT ON.

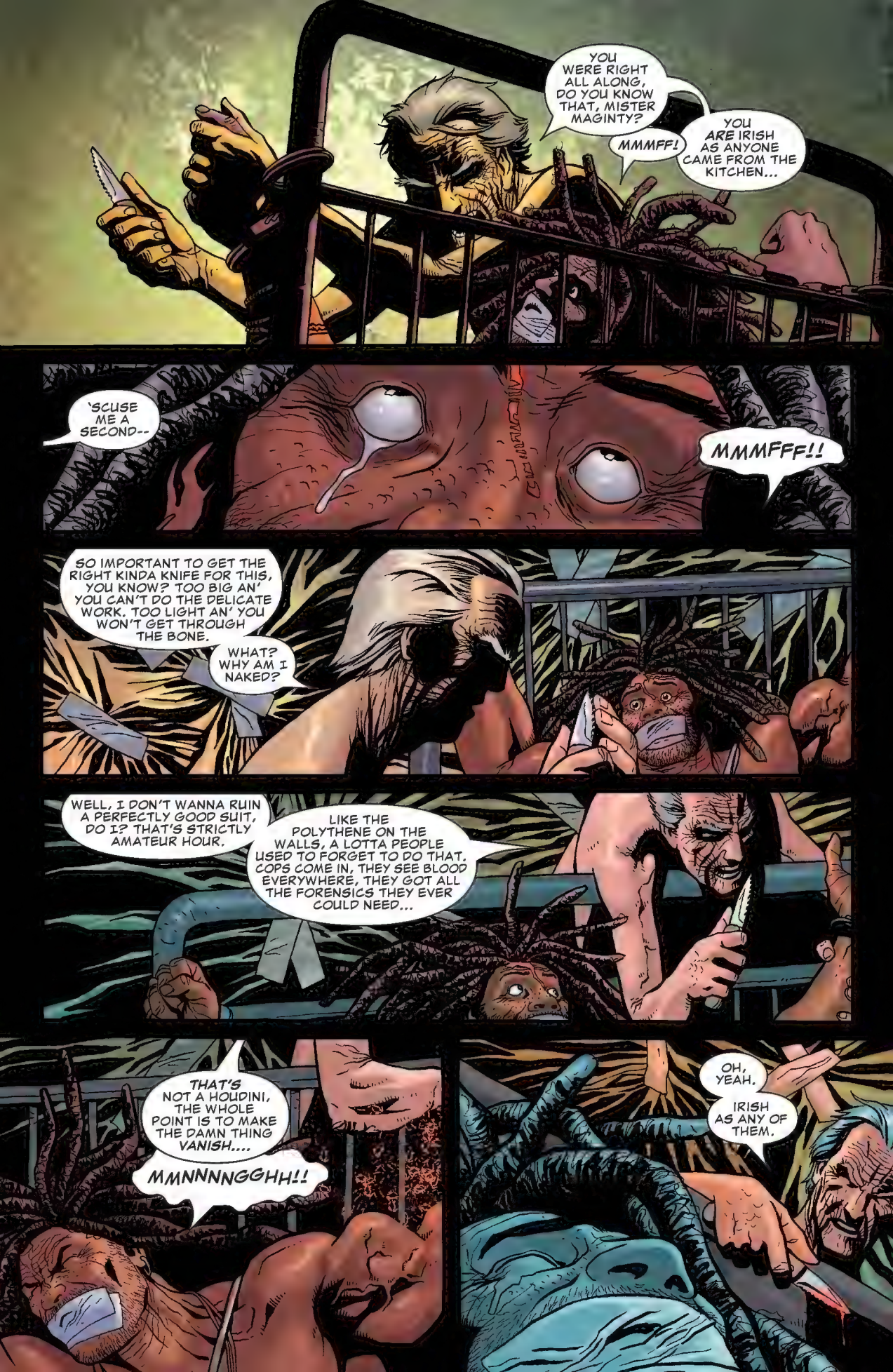
Y'SEE, THAT'S WHAT YOU BOYS NEVER SEEM TO UNDERSTAND. YOU'RE ALL SO EATEN UP WITH YOUR FIERY REPUBLICAN ZEAL OR WHATEVER, YOU NEVER STOP TO CONSIDER THAT THE OPPOSITION MIGHT NOT GIVE A FUCK.
YE'VE A FUNNY WAYA SHOWIN' IT, WELL!
I TOLD YOU, IT'S JUST A JOB. AVERAGE BRITISH SQUADDIE COMES TO ULSTER, DOES HIS TOUR OF DUTY, FUCKS OFF HOME AGAIN.
YOU THINK ANYONE *VOLUNTEERED* TO GO TO X-MAGLEN? OR THOSE SHITHOLES IN WEST BELFAST YOU'RE ALL SO FOND OF?
I MEAN IF ONE OF OUR MATES GOT KILLED, SURE, THEN WE WERE UP FOR A BARNEY. TOOK IT OUT ON THE NEXT STUPID BASTARD LOOKED AT US SIDEWAYS.
BUT YOU NEVER INVADED OUR COUNTRY, YOU NEVER TURNED IT INTO A FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL...
BUT WE BOMBED THE MAINLAND, WE HIT LONDON LOADSA TIMES...!
YOU NEVER HIT MY HOUSE.
YOU NEVER MADE IT ABOUT *ORDINARY PEOPLE*, PETER. NOT IN ANY WAY THAT COUNTED.
LET'S FACE IT, SINCE 'SIXTY-NINE WE'VE ALL BEEN PLAYING A GAME. THE EYES OF THE WORLD WERE ON BELFAST: NOT ALWAYS, BUT JUST ENOUGH.
WE COULDN'T JUST GO IN AND SLOT THE LOT OF YOU. YOU COULDN'T DO ANYTHING *TOO* HEAVY, OR ALL THE STUPID FUCKING YANKS WHO FUND YOU WOULD'VE SHAT THEMSELVES AND BACKED OFF SHARPISH.
LOOK AT ENNISKILLEN OR OMAGH, IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME ON THAT ONE.
WE KEPT A LID ON YOU, LAD, THAT'S ALL WE EVER HAD TO DO...
FUCK AWAY OFF--!


YE NEVER KEPT A LID ON ANYTHING, YE FUCKER! YE CAME TO FUCKIN' BEAT US DOWN AN' WE SENT YE HOME IN BOXES!
YOU WERE BLOODY GOOD FOR TRAINING ON, I HAVE TO GIVE YOU THAT.
WE MANAGED YOU. THAT WAS WHAT WE WERE TOLD TO DO.
THERE WAS ALL THAT SHITE ABOUT *THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL NEVER TALK TO TERRORISTS*, BUT THE CHANNELS WERE ALWAYS KEPT OPEN. AND ONCE THE I.R.A. TWIGGED THINGS WERE NEVER GOING TO CHANGE, THEY WERE READY TO TALK TOO.
THEY WERE SMART, THEY GOT INTO THE PEACE PROCESS AND WENT FOR THE BEST DEAL THEY COULD GET...
YE'RE A CYNICAL FUCKIN' BASTARD, D'YE KNOW THAT?
NO MORE THAN YOUR UNCLE FINN IS. 'COURSE, I DIDN'T HAVE TO GET MY FACE BLOWN OFF TO WAKE THE BLOODY HELL UP.
BUT IF I AM A CYNIC, IS BEING A BELIEVER REALLY ALL THAT MUCH BETTER?
IS NEVER GIVING IN, NEVER COMPROMISING, IS THAT REALLY SO GREAT? WHEN SO MANY PARTS OF YOUR COUNTRY HAVE BEEN TURNED INTO HELL? WHEN *THREE THOUSAND PEOPLE* HAVE DIED FOR SWEET FUCK ALL?
SO THAT'S YOUR MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND, IS IT? THAT'S WHAT YE'D SAY TO US, JUST FUCKIN' WELL QUIT AN' GIVE UP?
OH, JESUS.
THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND ARE GETTING ON WITH THEIR LIVES, YOU ARSEHOLE.
AS FOR YOU IN PARTICULAR, I'D SAY MAKE YOUR PEACE WITH GOD.
AS SOON AS I'VE KILLED FINN COOLEY, YOUNG ANDY OUT THERE'S GOING TO SHOOT YOU TWICE IN THE HEAD.

MISTER MAGINTY?
WAKE UP, MISTER MAGINTY.
THERE YOU GO.
UNN-UUUHHHHHH?!
KNEW YOU WOULDN'T WANNA MISS ONE OF HELL'S KITCHEN'S LEGENDS IN ACTION.

STILL WITH US, ANDY?
MM? OH. CHEERS.
THIS WON'T LAST MUCH LONGER. THIS TIME TOMORROW WE'LL PROBABLY BE ON THE PLANE HOME.
NOT LIKE PATROLLING IN BASRA, IS IT?
FUCKIN' RIGHT IT'S NOT. NEW YORK WITH YOU TWO MAKES IRAQ LOOK LIKE A TRAINING EXERCISE.
I DUNNO, YORKIE.
IT'S NOT WHAT I WAS EXPECTING, THAT'S ALL. I THOUGHT WE'D DO THE JOB AN' GET OUTTA HERE, I DIDN'T KNOW THERE'D BE SO MUCH FUCKIN' KILLIN'.
ALL OF A SUDDEN, I FEEL LIKE I'M UP TO ME EYEBALLS IN BLOOD...
WELCOME TO IRELAND, LAD.
LEANDRO FERNANDEZ '04

PUNISHER #12


YOU WERE RIGHT ALL ALONG, DO YOU KNOW THAT, MISTER MAGINTY?
MMMFF!
YOU ARE IRISH AS ANYONE CAME FROM THE KITCHEN...
'SCUSE ME A SECOND--
MMMFFF!!
SO IMPORTANT TO GET THE RIGHT KINDA KNIFE FOR THIS, YOU KNOW? TOO BIG AN' YOU CAN'T DO THE DELICATE WORK. TOO LIGHT AN' YOU WON'T GET THROUGH THE BONE.
WHAT? WHY AM I NAKED?
WELL, I DON'T WANNA RUIN A PERFECTLY GOOD SUIT, DO I? THAT'S STRICTLY AMATEUR HOUR.
LIKE THE POLYTHENE ON THE WALLS, A LOTTA PEOPLE USED TO FORGET TO DO THAT. COPS COME IN, THEY SEE BLOOD EVERYWHERE, THEY GOT ALL THE FORENSICS THEY EVER COULD NEED...
THAT'S NOT A HOUDINI, THE WHOLE POINT IS TO MAKE THE DAMN THING VANISH....
MMNNNNGGHH!!
OH, YEAH.
IRISH AS ANY OF THEM.

STUPID AS ANY OF THEM.
THE SAME BREEDA PRICK THAT NESBITT USED TO LORD IT OVER--GANG UPON GANG, FIGHTIN' FOR TWO FUCKIN' BLOCKS OR WHATEVER THEY THOUGHT WAS SO PRECIOUS, AN' HE KEPT THEM APART AN' HE SET THEM AGAINST EACH OTHER AN' HE RULED THEM AS IF HE WAS KING--
AN' IF ONE O' THEM GOT TOO BIG FOR HIS BOOTS...
THAT'S WHEN THEY'D MEET ME.
MMNNGGHH!!
AN' I THOUGHT I WAS DONE WI' THAT HELL, TILL YOU CAME AN' DRAGGED ME BACK INTO IT.
DRAGGED MY GRANDSON INTO IT.
HE'S SIX AN' HE SAW AN' HE KNOWS WHAT I AM--
MAGINTY, WHERE THE FUCK YOU--
GODDAMN MUTHAFUCKA.

MAGINTY...?
SHUT YOUR FUCKIN' MOUTH.
I'M THINKIN'.
WE'RE GONNA GO FINISH THIS.
MAGINTY... WHAT ABOUT YO' FINGERS, MAN?
PUT 'EM ON FUCKIN' ICE.

MAGINTY?
EXIT
CALM DOWN, BRENDA.
BUT--
I'VE BEEN EXPECTIN' THIS.
FINN COOLEY?
AT YER SERVICE, SIR.
NOT LOOKING TOO GOOD THERE, I MUST SAY.
YOU'RE ONE TO FUCKIN' TALK...
LISTEN, THIS COCKSUCKER CUT MY FUCKIN' HUSBAND TO PIECES--
YE'RE JUST JEALOUS IT WASN'T YOU.
C'MON, NOW.
HE CUT TOMMY UP, TRYNNA SCARE EVERYBODY SHITLESS. YOU WERE READY TO GO TO WAR. I TRIED BLOWIN' EVERYONE TO KINGDOM FUCK.
NONE'VE IT WORKED, AN' WE'RE ALL STILL AT SQUARE BLOODY ONE: TRUE?
TRUE.
OLD MAN NESBITT'S STILL FUCKIN' WITH ALL OF US.

HE'S REACHIN' OUT FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE. HE LEAVES US THIS MONEY AN' HE KNOWS WE'RE GONNA DO OUR BEST TO KILL EACH OTHER FOR IT.
HE CAN RELY ON US, DON'T YOU SEE THAT?
THAT FUCK MADE MY LIFE HELL WHEN I FIRST CAME HERE-- YOUNG BLACK MAN WITH A DUBLIN ACCENT, HE TREATED ME LIKE A FUCKIN' ZOO EXHIBIT. USED TO THROW ME PEANUTS FROM HIS POKER TABLE, CALLED ME PADDY THE FUCKIN' MONKEY...
AN' I TOOK IT, TOO. JUST LIKE WE ALL TOOK HIS SHIT.
YOU REMEMBER WHAT HE USED TO CALL US...?
HOW COULD I FORGET?
EXIT
"SHOWER O' CUNTS."
FUCK--
WHOA, WHOA! FRIGSAKE, DON'T YE KNOW WHO THIS IS?
THE GANG'S ALL HERE, BOYS.
THIS IS THE RIVER RATS.

BEEN WATCHIN' YOUR PLACE FOR TWO HOURS, BRENDA.
MRS. TONER TO YOU...
HE WALKS IN AN' NOTHIN' GOES NUCLEAR, THAT LEAVES JUST ONE POSSIBILITY.
GO ON WITH WHAT YE WERE SAYIN', MAGINTY.
SAYIN' WE DON'T HAVE TO TAKE NESBITT'S SHIT ANYMORE.
DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAIDA HIM.
DON'T HAVE TO BE PLAYED BY HIM.
AMEN.
THIS HERE'S MY PARTA THE CODE.
HAH HAH
WELL, IT'S A GRID REFERENCE, WE'VE KNOWN THAT ALL ALONG.. YE GOT THAT MAP ON YE THERE, MICHAEL?
I'S A-COMIN', MASSUH.

OH, JESUS FUCKIN' CHRIST...!
RIGHT UNDER YOUR NOSE THE WHOLE TIME, HUH?
FUCK YOU.
WELL, NOW WE KNOW...
YEAH, WE DO, DON'T WE?
SHIIIIITT...

FOR FUCK'S SAKE!!
YE STUPID FUCKIN' BASTARDS! LOOK AT YERSELVES!
YEZ ALMOST FUCKIN' HAD IT AN' NOW YE'RE SHITTIN' IT ALL AWAY!
I MEAN WHAT ARE WE LIKE, ANYWAY? ALL THAT MISERY AN' BLOODSHED BACK HOME, AN' WE COME TO THE STATES AN' THE BEST WE CAN DO IS JUST FUCKIN' CARRY ON WITH IT?
DID YEZ NOT EVEN HEAR WHAT MAGINTY WAS SAYIN'? WE DON'T HAVE TO SLAUGHTER EACH OTHER! WE CAN GET WHAT WE WANT WITHOUT THAT!
WE'RE FREE NOW...!
IN THE NAME O' FUCKIN' JESUS, WE'RE FREE O' THE FR GGIN' PAST.

THERE'S YOUR TRUCE.
WE GONNA TAKE 'EM HERE?
TOO MANY CIVVIES TO START A CONTACT.
CLUB WOULD'VE BEEN PERFECT, IF WE'D ONLY KNOWN THE RATS WERE THERE TOO...
LET'S SEE IF THEY'LL TAKE US SOMEWHERE QUIET.
STILL DON'T LIKE THIS. NESBITT BUYING THESE MAGGOTS OFF WITH HIS WILL.
I HATED SOMEONE LIKE HE HATED THEM--
I'D GO AHEAD AND WASTE THEM.

CAPTAIN PHILLIPS
YOU KNOW HOW MANY TIMES WE WENT PAST THIS GODDAMN THING...?
BEEN ANCHORED OUT HERE FOR YEARS, POLL.
WE WEREN'T MEANT TO KNOW.
PERFECT.
THERE'S A THIRD BOAT DOWN THERE, TOO.
BETTER BY THE MINUTE.
5
THINK NESBITT OWNED THIS?
MUST'VE. EASIER TO MAKE SURE NO ONE EVER CAME NEAR IT.
MAGINTY, CAN YOU'VE YER LADS WATCH FOR THE HARBOR PATROL?
54

OH, JESUS...
FUCKIN' THINGS!
TRY UP FRONT, OTHER SIDE O' THE BULKHEAD.
ARE YE SURE?
OF COURSE I'M FUCKIN' SURE!

TAKE THIS AN' GO UP THE HATCH AT THE FRONT. SEE IF YE CAN GET BEHIND THEM.
BRENDA, ANYONE COMES DOWN THE WAY WE DID, YOU FUCKIN' WELL BUTCHER THE BASTARDS...
SHIT--
COVER YER EYES!
AAAAAAHH!
AAAAAAHH! AAAAAAHH!
EAMON!
FUCKIN' BASTARD!
NO!!

YORKIE!
GOOD LAD!
AAAH--!
CATCH THAT, YE FUCKER YE!
THIS ONE'S ON HIS GAME.
CAME BACK FROM THE STUN GRENADE WAY TOO FAST.
TOO BAD FOR ME.
FRANK?

DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT PLANET I'M ON.
YOU ARE FUCKIN' DEAD!
BUT I THINK I'M ABOUT TO FIND OUT.
WAIT, WAIT, I SURRENDER! DON'T SHOOT!
DON'T!!
WRONG NIGHT FOR THAT, WANKER!
ARM FULL OF SHRAPNEL.
EYES FULL OF BLOOD.
YE DIRTY FUCKIN' HOOER YE, I'LL RIP THE FUCKIN' HEAD OFF YE--
GOING TO LOSE THIS ONE.
UNLESS--
AAAAAAAAAHHH!!!

GET TO THE BACK! COME ON!
WHERE THE FUCK'RE YOUR SPARE CLIPS--?
POLL... HELP ME...
JESUS! FUCK! AAAAAHHH!!
STILL SEEING TRIPLE HERE.
NOT GOOD AT ALL.
YOU HELP ME, POLL...YOU AN' ME...
ALWAYS... YOU AN' ME...
ALWAYS ME, EAMON.
ALWAYS ME.
AAAOW, JESUS FUCK!
WAIT!
THAT'S...
I THINK THAT'S IT.

UP YOU COME--
GET 'EM.
STILL GOTTA GET 'EM.
GET YOU OUT FIRST, FRANK--
WE GOT IT, WE GOT IT, WE FUCKIN' GOT IT--
HURRY UP, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!
SHUT THE FUCK UP, I'M--
JESUS, WHAT D'YOU BLOODY WEIGH--?
FUCK YOU, NESBITT! FUCK YOUR WHOLE SHITHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD!
YES!
WE FUCKIN' WIN...!
00:03
CUNTS
OH, YOU SADISTIC OLD--

YORKIE?
YORKIE...?
HERE.
MAKE IT QUICK, BEFORE THE COPS SHOW UP.
THANKS FOR THAT, BACK THERE.
AYE, NO PROBLEM.
ONE OF THESE DAYS, YOU AND I MIGHT EVEN BE QUITS.
I WASN'T KEEPING COUNT.

THIS OUGHT TO DO NICELY.
WALK HIM 'ROUND THE BACK, FIND SOMEWHERE OUT OF SIGHT. JUST SO LONG AS HE'S NOT FOUND FOR A DAY OR TWO.
KEEP THE PISTOL, WE'LL GET RID OF IT ON THE WAY OUT TO KENNEDY.
DONT GIVE ME ANY SHIT ABOUT YOUR LEGS.
GET OUT.
UH--
CAN I PRAY?
I COULDN'T GIVE A FUCK.

SURE YOU DON'T WANT A LIFT HOME?
NO NEED.
JUST TAGGED ALONG TO SEE IT FINISHED.
DON'T COME BACK HERE ANYTIME SOON.
ALL RIGHT?
HERE.

I DON'T FEEL ANY DIFFERENT.
ME DAD'S STILL DEAD AN' I DON'T FEEL THE SLIGHTEST BIT DIFFERENT.
NO, LAD.
LOOK AT OLD FRANK THERE, HE'S BEEN DOING THIS FOR THIRTY YEARS. D'YOU THINK HE FEELS ANY DIFFERENT?

KITCHEN IRISH

CONCLUSION

PUNISHER #13

MOTHER RUSSIA

PART ONE

MORE.
MAKE THE MOST OF IT.
IS LAST BOTTLE?
NO MORE. NOT EVER.
FUCK.
IS ONLY VODKA I LIKE. ALL OTHER VODKA IS PISS.
SEE? NOTHING LEFT, EVERYTHING FUCKED. ONCE WE ARE GREATEST PEOPLES IN WORLD--NOW WE SIT IN BARS IN BRIGHTON BEACH OR CONEY ISLAND, DRINKING 'TIL VODKA RUNS OUT.
LOOK! LOOK AT THIS ANIMAL! LEON RASTOVICH, HOW THE FUCK IS HE LET OUT OF PRISON?
THANKS TO HIS KIND, EVERYONE LOOKS AT RUSSIAN PEOPLES AND SEES ONLY FUCKING GANGSTERS...!
YOU ARE A STUPID OLD MAN, TALKING LIKE THAT IN HERE.

PISS ON YOU! AND PISS ON HIM!
I AM ALEXANDR BARANOVICH FORMICHENKO, I AM NOT AFRAID OF SOME STINKING COCKROACH!
LISTEN, YOU--
SCUM LIKE RASTOVICH AND SCUM WHO FOLLOW HIM, WHO SHAME THE NAME OF MOTHER RUSSIA! MOBSTER PIGS WHO DARE TO CALL THEMSELVES SOLDIERS!
I WAS AT LENINGRAD WHEN THE NAZIS CAME IN NINETEEN FORTY-ONE! THREE YEARS WE HELD OUT! THREE YEARS BEFORE THEY COULD RELIEVE US!
WE WERE SOLDIERS!
GET OUT OF HERE. YOU WANT TO STAY HEALTHY IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD, DON'T MENTION LEON RASTOVICH AGAIN.
FUCK LEON RASTOVICH.

GOT BUSINESS OF MY OWN WITH RASTOVICH. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.
TWO DAYS I'VE BEEN HUNTING THE MAGGOT DOWN HERE--THEN I STOP FOR A SANDWICH AND A LEAD FALLS RIGHT IN MY LAP.
BEFORE I FOLLOW IT UP, A LITTLE COMMUNITY WORK.
HEY--!
AAAAH! AAAAAH!!
ALEXANDR BARANOVICH FORMICHENKO IS PROTECTED.
OKAY
GOT KIND OF A THING ABOUT RESPECT FOR THE ELDERLY.

HEY, OLD MAN. STOP FOR A MINUTE.
LEAVE ME ALONE!
WE WANT TO TALK TO YOU.
YOU GOT A BIG MOUTH, YOU KNOW THAT?
BET YOU DON'T GOT SO MUCH TO SAY NOW, HUH?
LEAVE ME BE, DAMN YOU!
YOU FUCKING COWARDS, YOU--
UH?
FUCKING PUSSIES.

WHERE'S LEON RASTOVICH?
F-F-F-FUCK YOU!
JESUS!!
YOU'RE GOING 'ROUND PROTECTING HIS GOOD NAME AND HE DOESN'T EVEN TELL YOU WHERE HE IS?
HIS MOTHER'S! HE'S AT HIS MOTHER'S!
LITTLE BIT PISSED. I DIDN'T THINK OF THAT MYSELF.

AH, COLONEL FURY, THIS AIRCRAFT HAS ACTUALLY BEEN DESIGNATED A SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT...
COLONEL FURY?
SIR?
SON--
YOU JUST MADE MY DAY.
YOU ALWAYS WERE A GODDAMNED RAY OF SWEETNESS AND LIGHT, WEREN'T YOU, FURY?
CHECK THE SMALL PRINT, GENERAL. NOTHING IN THERE ABOUT US SUCKING EACH OTHER'S BALLS.

THERE ISN'T ANY SMALL PRINT...
AND JUST WHAT ELSE ARE YOU AWARE OF, EXACTLY?
NO, THERE'S A STRAIGHT DEAL. NO ONE'S MORE AWARE OF THAT THAN I AM.
DID YOU KNOW, FOR INSTANCE, THAT EARLY LAST YEAR A C.I.A. TEAM APPROACHED THIS SON OF A BITCH WITH A SIMILAR OFFER? THAT UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES THAT REMAIN UNCLEAR, SAID TEAM-- INCLUDING A SPECIAL FORCES UNIT SECONDED FROM FORT BRAGG-- WAS WIPED OUT ALMOST TO A MAN?
FUCK WITH THE BULL, YOU GET THE HORNS.
WHAT?
GENERALS, LISTEN UP. I'M ONLY GOING TO SAY THIS ONCE.
YOU BOYS CAME TO ME. THAT MEANS YOU WANT THIS THING DONE RIGHT, OR YOU'D JUST HAVE GOT SOME PENTAGON DICK TO RUN A SIMULATION--THEN YOU COULD SIT BACK AND WATCH DELTA FORCE GET CUT TO BITS ON C.N.N.
ONCE I START WORK I DON'T NEED YOUR OPINIONS. I DON'T NEED YOUR CLASSIFIED REPORTS. IF I EVER NEED ADVICE ON HOW TO FIGHT MY WAY UP THE PRESIDENT'S ASS WITHOUT COVERING FIRE, THAT'S WHEN I'LL COME TO YOU.
UNTIL THEN, SHUT THE FUCK UP.
AND BELIEVE ME WHEN I TELL YOU:
THIS IS THE ONLY MAN FOR THE JOB.

ONLY REAL PROBLEM IS THE TWO CAR-LOADS OF FUCKS.
ONCE THE SHOOTING STARTS THEY'LL BE THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR LIKE GANGBUSTERS. DOZEN OF THEM, ONE OF ME, POTENTIALLY VERY MESSY.
I COULD JUST DO THE JOB AND RUN. BUT THAT'D LEAVE THEM FREE TO HIRE ON WITH SOME OTHER ASSHOLE.
SCUM LIKE LEON RASTOVICH ARE NEVER SHORT OF WILLING TALENT.
WHICH WAS WHAT SAVED HIM LAST TIME.
TWO YEARS AGO I HIT A CLUB HE OWNED ON AVENUE X. WHOLE THING WENT LIKE CLOCKWORK-- EXCEPT HE TURNED OUT TO HAVE MORE BODYGUARDS THAN I HAD AMMUNITION.
THAT MEANT I HAD TO IMPROVISE, WHICH GAVE RASTOVICH THE TIME TO PULL A MASTERSTROKE. HE RAN LIKE HELL AND GAVE HIMSELF UP TO THE COPS.
WHICH GOT HIM THIRTY YEARS TO LIFE IN THE ONE PLACE I COULD NEVER REACH HIM.

HOW YOU GET EARLY RELEASE FOR MULTIPLE MURDER AND CHILD PROSTITUTION--LIKE THIS PIECE OF SHIT DID FRIDAY MORNING--
I CAN'T BEGIN TO GUESS.
LEON, BABUSHKA, YOU WANT MORE DUMPLINGS? MM?
YES PLEASE, MAMA.
THE MOTHER'S SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN. WORD HAS IT SHE BROUGHT IN THE KIDS FOR RASTOVICH'S OPERATION--FROM AN ORPHANAGE IN KAZAKHSTAN, THOUGH THE FEDS COULD NEVER PROVE IT.
AT THE TRIAL, HE ROLLED OVER ON A LOT OF BUSINESS PARTNERS. I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE HIS BOYS ARE HERE TO SHIELD HIM FROM.
BUT WHATEVER WAS DANGLED IN FRONT OF HIM, HE WOULDN'T GIVE UP HIS MAMA.
LEON!!
FUCK!

LEON! LEON! AAAAHH!
AAAAHH!
MOVE, YOU ASSHOLES!
BUREAU NEVER DID MAKE THOSE CHARGES STICK. HAD HALF AN IDEA ABOUT GIVING HER THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT.
FUCKER! COCKSUCKER! MURDERING SON OF A WHORE!
FUCK IT.
COME ON, COME ON, COME ON--!

KILL THE BURNERS. THEN TURN THE GAS BACK ON.
THEN GET THE HELL OUT.
OH, SHIT--!
JESUS, WE HAVE REALLY FUCKED UP HERE...!
WHAT THE HELL DO WE DO NOW?
CAN ANYONE SMELL--
HEY--!
AAAAAAH
WASN'T ENOUGH GAS ESCAPED TO KILL MORE THAN A COUPLE. BUT IT OUGHT TO KEEP ON BURNING.
HERD THEM WHERE I WANT THEM TO GO.

FUCK--
MOVE--
AAAAHH!
AAAAHH!
AAAAHH!
THEY LIKE TO THINK THEY'RE SOLDIERS, BUT THEY'RE WHORES.
SELLING THEIR YOUTH AND STRENGTH TO MONSTERS.
PROTECTING FILTH, WHO DEAL IN FEAR--
IN POISON--

IN THE BODIES OF INNOCENT CHILDREN.
YOU WORK FOR THE DEVIL, YOU BETTER BE READY TO DIE FOR HIM.

NEVER ENOUGH, IS IT?
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?
IF YOU'RE WONDERING HOW THAT PRICK GOT EARLY RELEASE FOR MURDER AND CHILD PROSTITUTION, THE ANSWER IS: I GOT HIM OUT.
THEN I KEPT TABS ON HIM. I NEEDED TO FIND YOU FAST.
IT'S JUST ME. NO SWAT TEAMS, NO BULLSHIT OF ANY KIND.
WANTED TO TALK A LITTLE BUSINESS.

BOOKER'S, NEAT.
CLUB SODA.
NICK FURY.
OLD-SCHOOL COLD WARRIOR. THE ORIGINAL BLACK OPS HARDCASE.
YOU BELIEVE THIS NO-SMOKING BULLSHIT? IN NEW YORK CITY?
JESUS FUCK.
LONG BEFORE I STEPPED OFF A C-130 AT DA NANG, FURY AND HIS TEAM HAD SET FIRE TO HALF OF ASIA.
CAN'T SAY I NOTICED.
NO.
ONE JOB. HIGH RISK. JUST ABOUT IMPOSSIBLE. YOU FUCK UP, NO ONE'S EVER HEARD OF YOU.
NOT IN THE MARKET.
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN FOR NEARLY THIRTY YEARS.
THAT'S WHY I KNEW I'D HAVE TO MAKE THIS GOOD.

USER NAMES AND PASSWORDS.
D.E.A., F.B.I., CUSTOMS, I.N.S., THE COAST GUARD. EVERY MAJOR POLICE DEPARTMENT ON THE EASTERN SEABOARD.
LOG ON ANY TIME YOU WANT AND YOU'LL KNOW EVERYTHING THEY KNOW. YOU'LL EVEN HAVE SATELLITE SURVEILLANCE.
EVERY SHITBAG FROM MAINE TO MIAMI WILL BE LIVING HIS LIFE IN YOUR GUNSIGHTS.
RASTOVICH WAS ONE THING. THIS IS A WHOLE OTHER LEVEL.
WHO ARE YOU WORKING FOR, FURY?
ARMY AND AIR FORCE.
SURPRISED TO HEAR THAT. CONSIDERING S.H.I.E.L.D. WAS ALWAYS U.N.-BACKED.
THESE DAYS, U.N. BACKING GETS YOU USED AS A GODDAMN DICKWIPE.
BUT I DO THIS FOR THOSE BRASS-HAT FUCKS--I SET UP THIS ONE JOB--
AND THINGS GET FIXED SO I GET S.H.I.E.L.D. BACK FOR GOOD.

FINAL PIECE OF THE PUZZLE.
WHOLE AGENCY'S BEEN A JOKE FOR YEARS. THEY PUT THE FUCKING ACCOUNTANTS IN CHARGE--THEN THEY WONDER WHY THE C.I.A. BEATS US TO THE PUNCH EVERYWHERE FROM INDONESIA TO IRAQ.
SAME AGAIN.
THAT'S WHY IT HAS TO BE YOU. THERE'S NO ONE LEFT WHO CAN DO THE GODDAMN JOB ANYMORE.
YOU'RE DOING THIS FOR THE MILITARY, YOU OUGHT TO BE SPOILED FOR CHOICE.
FUCK...SOME OF THE GUYS COMING UP THROUGH DELTA AND THE RANGERS NOWADAYS, I DON'T THINK THERE'S MUCH THEY WOULDN'T DO.
REAL STORMTROOPER SHIT.
SO INSTEAD YOU CAME TO ME?
YOU'VE GOT YOUR LIMITS, CASTLE.
I'M GOING TO HAVE ONE MORE DRINK. THEN I'M GOING TO TRY AND FUCK EVERY HOOKER IN NEW YORK, BEFORE SOME COCKSUCKER BANS THAT TOO.
DO I TAKE THIS WITH ME WHEN I GO?

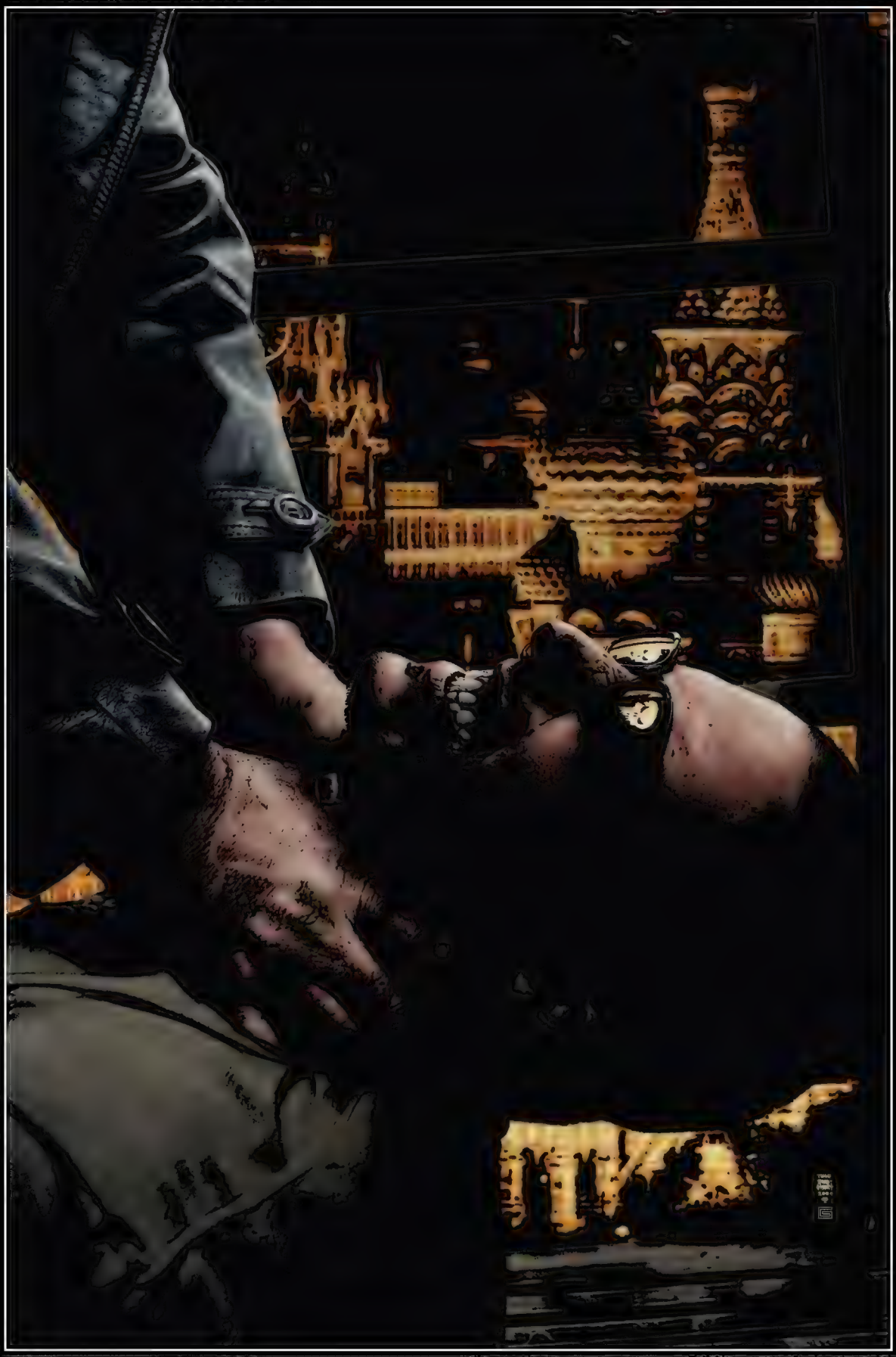
ONE QUESTION.
SHOOT.
WHY DON'T YOU DO THE JOB YOURSELF?
YOU KIDDING ME?
I'M NOT GETTING MY HEAD BLOWN OFF ON SOME FUCKING SUICIDE MISSION. I HAVE TO GET S.H.I.E.L.D. BACK AND SAVE THE GODDAMN WORLD.
CALL ME TOMORROW AT THE PLAZA.
NOT A LOT OF POINT IN ASKING WHAT THE JOB ENTAILS. FURY SAYS IT'S HIGH RISK AND JUST ABOUT IMPOSSIBLE, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT IT'LL TURN OUT TO BE.
ABOUT THE ONLY MAN ON EARTH WHOSE WORD I'D TRUST THAT FAR.

EVERYTHING SET AT YOUR END?
EVERYTHING'S READY TO GO.
I PULLED 'EM IN YESTERDAY. NO LEAVIN' WORD FOR THEIR FAMILIES. NO CELLPHONES, NO COMMUNICATIN' WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD AT ALL.
YOU GOT SEVEN BADASS SAND-NIGGERS JUST DYIN' TO STRIKE A BLOW FOR ALLAH...
HERE'S THEIR BIG CHANCE, THEN. THE OPERATION IS OFFICIALLY GREEN-LIT.
GENERAL, THAT IS THE BEST NEWS I HEARD IN TWO AN' A HALF YEARS.
NOT ENJOYING YOUR TIME IN YOUR SPIRITUAL HOME, RAWLINS?
FUCK MY SPIRITUAL HOME. THERE AIN'T NO LIQUOR, AN' YOU CAN'T TELL IF YOU GOT GOOD PUSSY OR NOT 'TIL YOU GET IT HOME AN' TAKE THE GODDAMN RAG OFF ITS HEAD.

SOONER I'M OUTTA HERE, THE BETTER...
YOU GET ON A PLANE THE SAME DAY THEY DO.
JUST MAKE SURE IT ISN'T THE SAME ONE.
HA HA FUCKIN' HA.
DICKHEAD.
WE'RE REALLY GOING TO DO THIS, THEN?
WE JUST DID IT.

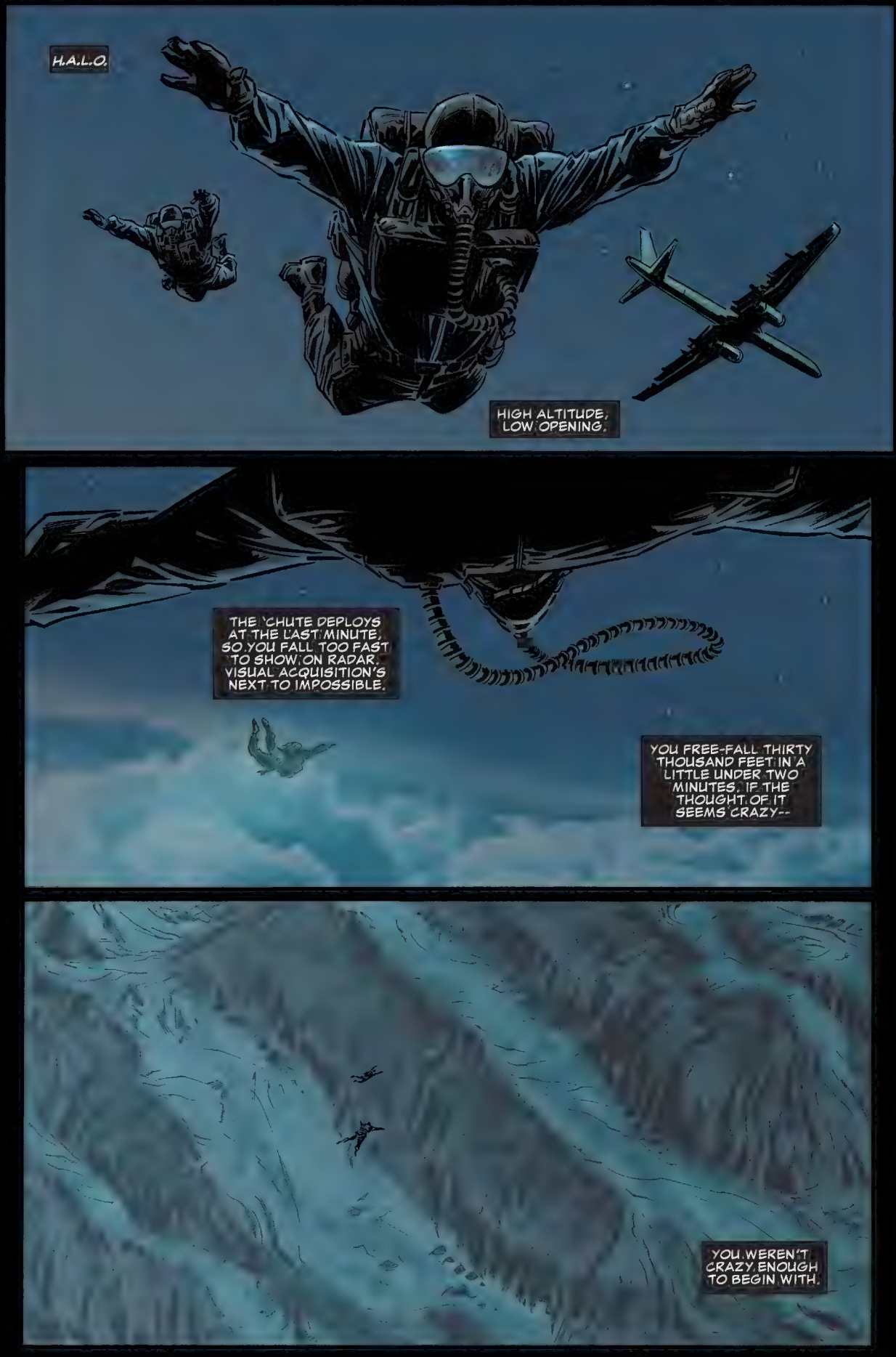
THAT ASSHOLE FURY-- AND THAT FUCKING ANIMAL HE'S HIRED--
ARE GOING TO SUCCEED WHETHER THEY LIKE IT OR NOT.

PUNISHER #14



FIVE MILES OVER SIBERIA, AMERICAN AIRLINES FLIGHT 2205 FROM ANCHORAGE TO MOSCOW MAKES A MINOR DEVIATION FROM ITS COURSE.
THEY'LL BE BACK ON TRACK LONG BEFORE THE RUSSIAN RADAR GETS SUSPICIOUS. THE PASSENGERS WON'T EVEN NOTICE. THE PILOT JUST DOES WHAT HE'S BEEN TOLD; HE DOESN'T KNOW THE REASON.
ONLY THE CREW CHIEF KNOWS WE'RE HERE.
GO!!
MOTHER RUSSIA
PART TWO

IT WAS THE SAME IN RHODE ISLAND, AT THE AIR FORCE BASE. IF ANYONE WONDERED ABOUT THEIR ORDERS, THEY KEPT IT TO THEMSELVES.
I WASN'T ASKED FOR I.D., WASN'T QUESTIONED, WASN'T EVEN SEARCHED. THE SERGEANT ON THE GATE MUTTERED SOMETHING TO HIS BOSS ABOUT PROTECTED BY THE LORD OF DARKNESS.
HE HADN'T BEEN THERE LONG, BUT FURY HAD THE PLACE RUNNING JUST HOW HE LIKED IT.
COLONEL, THERE'S NO SMOKING IN--
FUCK OFF AND RUN THE FILM, SONNY.
YOU'RE GOING TO RUSSIA.


H.A.L.O.
HIGH ALTITUDE, LOW OPENING.
THE 'CHUTE DEPLOYS AT THE LAST MINUTE, SO YOU FALL TOO FAST TO SHOW ON RADAR. VISUAL ACQUISITION'S NEXT TO IMPOSSIBLE.
YOU FREE-FALL THIRTY THOUSAND FEET IN A LITTLE UNDER TWO MINUTES. IF THE THOUGHT OF IT SEEMS CRAZY--
YOU WEREN'T CRAZY ENOUGH TO BEGIN WITH.

CHECHEN REBELS.
PRISONERS THE IVANS TOOK IN NINETY-FOUR, THEN DIDN'T BOTHER TO RELEASE. NEVER KNOW WHEN THEY MIGHT COME IN USEFUL.
OKAY, HERE WE GO. IT HAPPENS...
NOW.
THAT WAS REAL TIME. NOT A TRICK SHOT, NOT FIVE MINUTES LATER.
IT'S WHAT YOU'RE GOING IN TO FETCH FOR US.

THE GORY BYRRANGA MOUNTAINS, NORTHERN SIBERIA.
SEVEN HUNDRED MILES INSIDE THE ARCTIC CIRCLE.
OVER THE NEXT RIDGE IS A VILLAGE BY THE NAME OF SUHDEK. ON THE MAIN STREET IS A BAR, THE ONLY ONE IN TOWN.
OVER THE RIDGE AFTER THAT IS A NUCLEAR MISSILE BASE, WITH THIRTY TEN-MEGATON-TIPPED I.C.B.M.S IN SILO.
ALONG WITH SOMETHING ELSE.
TEN MILES NORTH OF SUHDEK, ON THE EDGE OF THE LAPTEV SEA, IS A PREARRANGED PICKUP POINT. TOMORROW NIGHT THE U.S.S. SILVERFISH WILL SURFACE AND PUT ASHORE A SEAL TEAM.
WE'LL EITHER BE THERE OR WE WON'T.

IT'S A SUPER-VIRUS, SOME KIND OF FLESH EATER.
WE DON'T KNOW HOW IT WORKS, OR EVEN WHAT TO CALL IT. SOME BRIGHT SPARK SUGGESTED BARBAROSSA.
EVGENY STENKOV. HE GREW IT IN THE LAB FOR THE RUSSIAN MILITARY--BUT HE MET A U.S. AIR FORCE GENERAL AT AN ARMS CONFERENCE, AND GAVE HIM THE TAPE YOU JUST WATCHED.
THE GENERAL--AND SOME OTHERS--MADE STENKOV A BETTER OFFER, INCLUDING A NEW LIFE IN THE STATES. HE SHOT HIS ASSISTANT, BURNED EVERYTHING TO DO WITH HIS WORK, TOOK THE LAST SURVIVING SAMPLE OF THE VIRUS--AND HE RAN.
HE ALSO TOOK ALONG HIS DAUGHTER.
HE ALMOST MADE IT. THERE WAS A SPECIAL OPS BLACKHAWK ON ITS WAY TO PICK HIM UP FROM SEVERNAYA ZEMLYA; IT WOULD HAVE FLOWN HIM OUT TO A SURVEY SHIP IN NEUTRAL WATERS.
EXCEPT THE RUSSIANS WERE A LITTLE PISSED. THE MIGS WERE UP. THE BLACKHAWK'S AT THE BOTTOM OF THE KARA SEA, WITH ITS COMPLETELY DENIABLE DELTA FORCE TEAM ALL STILL ABOARD.
THIS IS GALINA, EVGENY STENKOV'S DAUGHTER.
HE INJECTED HER WITH BARBAROSSA JUST BEFORE HE DIED.

THIS WAS BY PRIOR ARRANGEMENT WITH THE GENERALS. IN THE EVENT OF CAPTURE, GALINA WOULD CARRY THE VIRUS UNTIL THE U.S. COULD GET HER AND EVGENY OUT.
HOW THEY WOULD DO THAT--AND HOW EVGENY WOULD STAND UP TO THE RUSSIANS TRYING TO BEAT THE FORMULA OUT OF HIM--WELL, NO ONE REALLY GAVE THAT MUCH THOUGHT...
WHICH WAS A SHAME, BECAUSE TEN MINUTES INTO HIS INTERROGATION HE DIED OF A MASSIVE HEART ATTACK.
EVGENY SHOT HER FULL OF THE ANTIDOTE--HE TOOK THE FORMULA FOR *THAT* TO HIS GRAVE, TOO. BUT ACCORDING TO WHAT LITTLE ADDITIONAL DATA HE PUT ON THE TAPE, THE ANTIDOTE WILL DESTROY BARBAROSSA COMPLETELY INSIDE THE NEXT FORTY-EIGHT HOURS.
ON THE OTHER HAND, IF SOMEONE CAN GET HER OUT BEFORE THEN, WE HAVE PEOPLE WHO CAN USE A SAMPLE OF HER BLOOD TO SAVE THE VIRUS--EVGENY'S TAPE AGAIN.
WHY DIDN'T THE VIRUS KILL THE GIRL?
I HAVE A SOURCE IN MOSCOW SAYS SHE'S IN A MISSILE SILO JUST SOUTH OF THE LAPTEV--MAKES SENSE, IT'S BY FAR THE MOST SECURE FACILITY IN THE AREA EVGENY WAS PICKED UP. THERE ARE SPECIALISTS WORKING ON HER BLOOD RIGHT NOW, BUT WITHOUT THE TAPE DATA THEY'RE GROPING IN THE DARK. THEY MIGHT EVEN KILL HER.
THE GENERALS DON'T WANT THE RUSSIANS--OR ANYONE ELSE--GETTING THEIR HANDS ON THE VIRUS. THAT'S WHY THEY HIRED ME.
THAT'S WHY I HIRED YOU.

THERE'S A RUMOR THE RUSSIANS ARE OUR FRIENDS THESE DAYS.
WELL, THERE'S FRIENDS AND THERE'S FRIENDS.
THE OLD GAMES NEVER CHANGE, CASTLE.
YOU KNOW THAT.
OH, AND ONE OTHER THING.
THIS IS CAPTAIN MARTIN VANHEIM, DELTA BY WAY OF THE EIGHTY-SECOND.

I DIDN'T LIKE IT.
NEITHER HAD FURY, WHEN THEY TOLD HIM.
BUT THE GENERALS HAD INSISTED: VANHEIM WAS IN OR THE WHOLE JOB WAS OFF.
HE KNOWS RUSSIAN COMPUTER SYSTEMS, I DON'T. IF THINGS GO BAD INSIDE THE SILO, THAT MIGHT MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE.
ALL THE SAME, I'VE BEEN WORKING ON MY OWN FOR YEARS.
AND VANHEIM BUGS ME.
IN MY DAY, THE SPECIAL FORCES BOYS DID THEIR BEST TO KEEP IT LOW KEY. THEY LOOKED LIKE LONGSHOREMEN OR TRUCKERS, ANYTHING BUT WHAT THEY WERE.
THIS KID'S A WALKING ACTION FIGURE.
GREATEST AMBITION'S PROBABLY A POSTHUMOUS BRONZE STAR.
THAT'S SUHDEK.

SIR, OUR MAN ON AMERICAN 2205 JUST CALLED IN. SAYS THEY JUMPED RIGHT ON SCHEDULE.
GOOD. WHAT WAS IT YOU WERE WHINING ABOUT, GENERAL?
I WAS *SAYING*, FURY, THAT I REGARD THE BRIEFING YOU GAVE THIS *MERCENARY* OF YOURS THIS MORNING AS NOTHING SHORT OF A *CRITICAL SECURITY BREACH*. HE DID *NOT* NEED TO KNOW THE DETAILS OF BARBAROSSA IN ORDER TO RETRIEVE THE SAMPLE.
WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT HERE IS THE MOST DANGEROUS BIOLOGICAL AGENT IN THE HISTORY OF GERM WARFARE. BARELY TWO DOZEN PEOPLE EVEN KNOW IT *EXISTS*; ADDING TO THAT NUMBER RENDERS KEEPING THE DAMN THING ISOLATED *INFINITELY MORE DIFFICULT*...
CASTLE DESERVED TO KNOW THE STAKES. IN RETURN, I CAN RELY ON HIM TO NOT SAY SHIT TO ANYONE.
AND I *KNOW* WHAT BARBAROSSA IS. THE THOUGHT OF THAT UNHOLY HORROR IN YOUR SNEAKY LITTLE HANDS IS JUST THE LESSER OF SEVERAL EVILS, BELIEVE ME.
HOW *DARE* YOU--!
ARE YOU *SUGGESTING* THAT *SENIOR OFFICERS* OF THE *UNITED STATES ARMY* AND *AIR FORCE* WOULD CONSIDER *USING* SUCH A--
WELL, REASSURE ME, GENERAL.
DON'T SAY "SAMPLE".
SAY "SIX-YEAR-OLD GIRL".

I REALLY HATE HIM...
TAKE IT EASY, BOBBY. HE MIGHT HAVE TOLD HIS MONSTER EVERYTHING-- BUT WE DIDN'T TELL HIM EVERYTHING.
HE DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT RAWLINS. HE DOESN'T KNOW THE FULL LOWDOWN ON BARBAROSSA, EITHER.
NO, I'LL TELL YOU FURY'S REAL PROBLEM, BOYS...
HE DOESN'T KNOW HIS PLACE.

WE CACHE THE WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT AND MAKE STRAIGHT FOR THE BAR. MY RUSSIAN'S PRETTY RUSTY, SO VANHEIM BUYS THE BEERS.
WE HAVEN'T BEEN THERE TEN MINUTES WHEN WE SEE EXACTLY WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR.
VODKA. AND KEEP IT COMING!
FROM THE BASE, YOU THINK?
WHERE ELSE?
DON'T LOOK UP TO MUCH. RESERVISTS, PROBABLY.
GIVE THEM A WHILE TO GET LOADED, AND WHEN THEY HEAD FOR HOME...
THEY COULD BE HERE FOR HOURS. WE'VE ALREADY BEEN NOTICED, WE NEED TO GET ON WITH IT AND GET OUT.
PLAN B.
START A FIGHT.

I'LL KEEP THINGS GOING WHILE YOU GET THOSE TWO OUT THE BACK. DON'T GET BOGGED DOWN WITH THE OTHERS.
I THINK I CAN HANDLE RABBLE LIKE THIS...
GLAD TO HEAR IT.
ONE THING: YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE SOME YAKFUCKER IN OFF THE TUNDRA.
IT'S GOING TO LOOK A LITTLE STRANGE IF YOU START USING TAI CHI.
YOU SPILLED MY BEER, YOU FAT SON OF A BITCH.
WHO THE FUCK DO
YUNNHH!

TAKE THIS ASSHOLE APART!
NOT MUCH ROOM TO MANEUVER IN HERE.
HARD NOT TO HIT THE WRONG GUY.
WHICH IS WHAT I'M COUNTING ON.
JUST BEFORE THE WHOLE PLACE GOES INSANE, I CATCH A GLIMPSE OF VANHEIM GETTING STARTED.
NOT A NATURAL BRAWLER, MAYBE.
BUT HE SOON GETS INTO THE SPIRIT OF THINGS.

PRETTY SOON IT'S CHAOS. TAKE THE COPS ALL NIGHT TO CALM THIS DOWN, WHICH SHOULD GIVE US THE HEAD-START WE NEED.
I WAIT 'TIL VANHEIM MAKES HIS MOVE ON THE SOLDIERS--
THEN I START THE STRATEGIC WITHDRAWAL.
VANHEIM DRAGS THEM OUT THE BACK, I GO OUT THE WINDOW. WE R.V., THEN TAKE THEM BACK TO WHERE WE LEFT THE GEAR.
THEN WE--

FUCKING COCKSUCKER.
FUCKING FAGGOT, FUCKING PIGSHIT. GET UP AND FUCK WITH ME SOME MORE.
HEAD WON'T CLEAR QUICK ENOUGH.
SOUNDS, SIGHTS, THOUGHTS ALL COMING IN LIKE SHARDS OF GLASS.
SOMETHING LOOKS FAMILIAR FOR A MOMENT.
CAN'T REMEMBER WHY.
BUT THIS GUY'LL HAVE ME FOR BREAKFAST IF I DON'T QUIT FUCKING AROUND.
AAK
LIKE SO.
OKAY?
SWELL.

THESE TWO?
CAN'T RISK IT.
NOT YOUR LUCKY NIGHT, BOYS.
UH...?
BUT DON'T TAKE THE MONEY IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE JOB.
WE FIND THEIR I.D. FOR THE BASE, THEIR SWIPECARDS, AND--UNEXPECTED BONUS HERE--THEIR CAR KEYS. JUST SOME PIECE OF SHIT SKODA, BUT IT BEATS A SIX-MILE HIKE IN SOMETHING UNDER MINUS THIRTY.
THE BODIES GO IN A SNOWDRIFT OUTSIDE TOWN.
IDEA IS TO GET INSIDE THE SILO BEFORE THOSE TWO ARE MISSED. OFF-DUTY, A NIGHT ON THE VODKA--BE HOURS BEFORE THEY'RE OVERDUE.
BY THE TIME THE COPS BUST UP THE FIGHT, AND SOMEONE MENTIONS THE OUT-OF-TOWNERS WHO STARTED EVERYTHING--
WE SHOULD BE UNDERGROUND.

SECURITY HERE'S A FUCKING JOKE...
GUY JUST WAVED US THROUGH, HE DIDN'T EVEN LOOK AT THE I.D. PAPERS...
LUCKY FOR US.
THIS IS A *NUCLEAR MISSILE BASE.* DON'T THESE PEOPLE FOLLOW ANY KIND OF PROCEDURE?
THEY MARK TIME 'TIL THEY GET POSTED SOMEWHERE ELSE. I DOUBT ONE IN TEN OF THEM COULD TELL YOU WHY THE BASE IS HERE.
THIS IS RUSSIA, NOT THE U.S.S.R.
INNER PERIMETER. THIS ONE WON'T BE SO EASY.

OH, SORRY, FRIEND.
FOR FUCK'S SAKE...
HEY.
YOU'RE N--

LAYOUT'S JUST LIKE FURY TOLD US. THAT GUY GETS AMAZING INTEL.
THAT'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO BREAK INTO A NUCLEAR MISSILE BASE.
EXCEPT FOR THE NEXT PART, WHERE YOU KILL EVERY LIVING THING YOU FIND.

ALLAH AKBAR, YOU DUMB SHITS.
ENJOY YOUR TWENTY-ONE VIRGINS.
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...THEN ON TO NEW YORK-NEWARK.
HALLE-FUCKIN'-LUJAH.
HAVE A PLEASANT FLIGHT, MISTER RAWLINS.
YEAH, HAVE A PLEASANT FLIGHT, BOYS.
GIVE MY REGARDS TO MOSCOW.

PUNISHER #15

AAAAAAAAHH!!
WH-WH-WHAT'S THAT?
AAAAAAAAHH!! AAAAAAAAHH!!
IS SOMEONE DOING TESTS ON PEOPLE...?
SOMEONE'S SHOOTING PEOPLE, YOU STUPID LITTLE BITCH!
I'M SCARED...!
SHUT UP! SHUT UP!
YOU STAY RIGHT THERE AND KEEP YOUR GODDAMNED MOUTH SHUT, OR WE'LL DO TESTS AND TESTS AND TESTS ON YOU FOR THE REST OF YOUR FUCKING LIFE!
AAAH--!
GALINA STENKOV.

MOTHER RUSSIA

PART THREE

TWENTY MINUTES SINCE THEY ENTERED THE SILO, SIR. IF ANYONE WAS GOING TO GET OFF A DISTRESS CALL, WE'D HAVE HEARD SOMETHING BY NOW.
GOOD.
FURY'S CREATURE'S EFFICIENT, IF NOTHING ELSE...
LET'S NOT FORGET OUR OWN BOY. VANHEIM'S NO BEGINNER AT THIS.
YES, BUT WHAT ABOUT RAWLINS' OPERATION?
ANYTHING GOES WRONG THERE, AND--
RAWLINS HASN'T LET US DOWN YET, YOU KNOW THAT.
ONE OF YOU BOYS GIVE US AN UPDATE THERE?
GULF SOUTH FLIGHT TWO-NINER HITS RUSSIAN AIRSPACE IN AN HOUR, SIR. E.T.A. AT MOSCOW THIRTEEN THIRTY-FIVE.
WHAT'D I TELL YOU?
KEEP UP SURVEILLANCE AS LONG AS WE'VE GOT THE SATELLITE. ANYONE LEAVES THAT PLACE OR YOU INTERCEPT ANY PERTINENT RADIO TRAFFIC, WE WANT TO KNOW RIGHT AWAY.
LET'S GO SEE WHAT'S FOR SUPPER.

ARE YOU OKAY?
MY DADDY WAS MEAN TO ME.
HE STUCK A THING IN MY ARM AND IT REALLY, REALLY HURT.
THEN THESE PEOPLE TOOK HIM AWAY AND THEY BROUGHT ME HERE, AND THEY WERE MEAN TO ME TOO.
THEY STUCK THINGS IN MY ARMS AND THEY TOOK MY BLOOD... AND THEY KEPT DOING IT , THEY SAID THEY HAD TO DO TESTS, AND I DIDN'T WANT TO BUT-BUT-
WHY'S EVERYONE SO MEAN TO ME...?
NOT FEELING GOOD ABOUT THIS. DON'T KNOW IF MY RUSSIAN'S UP TO IT.
AND THE LAST KID I SPOKE TO WAS MY DAUGHTER.
PUSHING HER GUTS BACK INTO HER BELLY.
TELLING HER SHE WAS GOING TO MAKE IT.
GALINA, MY NAME IS FRANK.
IF ANYONE ELSE TRIES TO BE MEAN TO YOU, I'LL BE MUCH, MUCH MEANER TO THEM.
I PROMISE.

REALLY...?
YES.
I'VE COME HERE TO RESCUE YOU. THERE'S ANOTHER MAN WITH ME. WE'RE GOING TO TAKE YOU SOMEWHERE SAFE.
WHAT DO YOU SAY?
OKAY...
OKAY.
LET'S GET THESE WIRES OFF YOU.
I NEED YOU TO DO SOMETHING FOR ME. BEFORE WE LEAVE THIS ROOM, I NEED YOU TO CLOSE YOUR EYES AND KEEP THEM ABSOLUTELY SHUT TIGHT. DON'T OPEN THEM UNTIL I TELL YOU.
CAN YOU DO THAT?
Y...YES...
YOU PROMISE?
YES.

ONCE VANHEIM HIT THE COMMS ROOM, THE REST WAS EASY.
BETTER THIS WAY.
NO ONE LEFT TO RAISE THE ALARM, WHEN WE WALK OUT OF HERE WITH THE SIX-YEAR-OLD STAR PRIZE.
GOOD, YOU GOT HER. LAUNCH CENTER'S CLEAR TOO.
THEY'RE MEANT TO CHECK IN WITH COMMAND IN MOSCOW ON THE HOUR; THAT STILL LEAVES US FORTY-TWO MINUTES...
MIGHT AS WELL GET MOVING.
MIGHT AS WELL.

SUNRISE IN ABOUT AN HOUR. BY THEN WE'LL BE LONG GONE.
LIE LOW ALL DAY, THEN MAKE OUR WAY TO THE LAPTEV. R.V. WITH THE SEALS. GO HOME.
SO RUNS THE THEORY, ANYHOW.
HERE WE GO.
GALINA, GET ON MY BACK. IF ANYONE'S OUT HERE I WANT YOU TO STAY AS LOW AS YOU CAN.
OKAY...
FUCK!!

OH, SHIT--
VANHEIM, GET THE DOOR--
IT'S TOO SLOW!
DOWN.
JESUS--!
THEY WERE DRINKING COFFEE. IN THESE UNIFORMS WE COULD HAVE WALKED RIGHT PAST THEM.
NOW WE'RE TRAPPED.
AND WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE IN FRONT OF THE KID.

THE MAN FROM MOSCOW.
AND ABOUT FUCKING TIME.
THINGS TAKE TIME THESE DAYS, SEMYON. YOU KNOW THAT.
OH, I KNOW THAT. BUT I ASSUMED WITH THE WORLD'S MOST LETHAL BIOLOGICAL AGENT AT STAKE, THEY MIGHT HAVE HAD SOMEONE HERE JUST A LITTLE SOONER.
PARTICULARLY WHEN THERE'S ALREADY BEEN ONE ATTEMPT TO STEAL THE DAMN THING FROM UNDER OUR NOSES...
Российская газет
OURS NOT TO REASON WHY, OLD FRIEND.
OH GOD, COME AND LOOK AT THIS FAT OLD SLUG THEY'VE SENT US...!
LET'S SEE--
OH, MY DEAR GOD.
MM?
DON'T YOU KNOW WHO THAT IS? THAT'S NIKOLAI ALEXANDROVICH ZAKHAROV.
THAT'S THE MAN OF STONE.

HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN EATING ONE OR TWO PIES OF STONE...
PLEASE, SEMYON, I BEG YOU! DO NOT MOUTH OFF TO THIS MAN!
PUT YOUR INFAMOUS SENSE OF HUMOR ON HOLD, JUST THIS ONE TIME. DON'T FUCK WITH HIM IN ANY WAY.
BUT--
THIS IS NOT A MAN WHO RESPONDS WELL TO IRONY, SEMYON...!
ZAKHAROV WAS IN KABUL THROUGHOUT THE EIGHTIES. HE DID THINGS THAT--
WELL, SUFFICE TO SAY THAT IF HE'D BEEN LEFT TO HIS OWN DEVICES, WE'D STILL HAVE AFGHANISTAN. IT'S JUST THAT THERE WOULDN'T BE MUCH OF AFGHANISTAN WORTH HAVING.
OH, SHIT. HE BROUGHT THE MONGOLIAN.
WHO?
YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW.

GENERAL ZAKHAROV, I AM COLONEL LUGANSKY. THIS IS MAJOR--
YEREMIN, I KNOW. WHERE IS THE STENKOV GIRL NOW?
SHE'S IN THE SILO, ONE KILOMETER FROM HERE. THE MEDICAL TEAM ARE ATTEMPTING TO RETRIEVE THE VIRUS FROM HER BLOODSTREAM.
YOU HAVE THE REPORT ON THE HELICOPTER SHOOT-DOWN? WAS THE AIRCRAFT IDENTIFIED?
THE INCIDENT OCCURRED AT NIGHT, SIR, OUT OVER THE KARA SEA. THE PILOT OF THE MIG SIMPLY LOCKED UP THE TARGET AND FIRED WHEN ORDERED, HE DIDN'T--
FROM THE SIZE OF THE RADAR CONTACT, COULD IT HAVE BEEN A BLACKHAWK?
HE DOESN'T SPECIFY-- WAIT A MINUTE, YOU THINK THIS WAS THE AMERICANS?
BUT YOU THINK IT'S TERRORISTS, LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE.
ANYTHING ELSE UNUSUAL TO REPORT? ANYTHING AT ALL?
NOTHING, SIR. ALL QUIET ON THE ASS-END-OF-NOWHERE FRONT.
WELL...
WELL?

IT'S, IT'S JUST THAT, AH, WE HAD A REPORT OF SOME TROUBLE IN SUHDEK LAST NIGHT, SIR. THAT'S THE LOCAL TOWNSHIP.
WELL, TWO OF THEM HAVEN'T REPORTED IN...
THERE WAS A FIGHT IN A BAR, ACTUALLY QUITE A SERIOUS ONE--THE POLICE SAY SEVERAL MEN ARE IN THE HOSPITAL, ONE'S EVEN IN THE MORGUE. A LOT OF OUR MEN DRINK AT THIS PLACE WHEN THEY'RE OFF DUTY, AND...
SIR, THIS SORT OF THING IS NOT UNCOMMON. THE MEN ARE BORED, QUITE FRANKLY, AND--
THEY ARE GUARDING A NUCLEAR MISSILE SILO. IF THEIR DISCIPLINE IS A PILE OF SHIT THEN THEY CLEARLY LACK PROPER COMMAND, NOT EXCITEMENT.
GET ME WITNESSES. SURVIVORS OF THE FIGHT. AND FIND THE MISSING MEN IMMEDIATELY.
GENERAL ZAKHAROV, THE HELICOPTER WAS DESTROYED *BEFORE* THE GIRL WAS BROUGHT HERE. SINCE HER PROTECTION BECAME MY RESPONSIBILITY WE HAVE RECORDED ABSOLUTELY *NO* SERIOUS INCIDENTS.
SIR!!
I CAN UNDERSTAND IF THAT DETAIL HAD SLIPPED YOUR MIND, GENERAL; IT'S A LONG, TIRING DRIVE FROM MOSCOW, AND--
SIR, THERE'S BEEN AN INCIDENT AT THE SILO! A FIREFIGHT! WE'VE TAKEN CASUALTIES, SIR!
FUCK.

AT LEAST WE CAN SEE WHAT'S COMING FOR US...
WE CAN 'TIL THEY SHOOT THE CAMERAS OUT.
GET ON A TERMINAL AND FIND OUT EVERYTHING YOU CAN ABOUT THIS PLACE. LOOK FOR ACCESS POINTS, SEE IF YOU CAN FIND US A WAY OUT.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
BUY TIME.
GALINA, YOU STAY RIGHT HERE 'TIL IT'S TIME TO GO. READ THAT FILE I GAVE YOU, IT'S FULL OF INTERESTING THINGS.
CASTLE, LISTEN--
WAIT A MINUTE, IS THAT THE FILE WITH THE GO-CODES?
YOU BROUGHT YOUR COPY OF CAT IN THE HAT, FEEL FREE.
SOMETHING YOU WANTED TO TELL ME?
YOU THINK I PANICKED UP THERE, DON'T YOU?
I THINK THAT WAS AN OLD WRECK OF A T-54 THEY PROBABLY BROUGHT IN HERE TO WORK ON THE ENGINE. THEY WOULDN'T HAVE GIVEN US A SECOND GLANCE.

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I CAN DO THE JOB, CASTLE. I AM DELTA FORCE, THE BEST OF THE BEST. I HAVE WHAT IT TAKES AND I WILL DO WHAT IT TAKES.
YOU HAVE MY WORD: NOTHING LIKE THAT WILL HAPPEN AGAIN.
KNOW WHERE THE ARMORY IS?
UH, YEAH. END OF THE CORRIDOR AND TURN RIGHT.
TWO OF THEM! THEY'RE IN THE SILO, THEY JUST FUCKING MURDERED MY CREW!
LOOK--
COMING UP!
SPREAD OUT, ALL OF YOU! CHECK YOUR TARGETS!
CUT THOSE PIGFUCKERS IN HALF--

JESUS!!
GET HIM! FOR FUCK'S SAKE, TAKE HIM DOWN!
NO! NO! DON'T LET HIM--

AHHHH!
PURE OVERKILL.
TWELVE-POINT-SEVEN MILLIMETER DUSHKA'S JUST LIKE OUR FIFTY CAL. REALLY DESIGNED TO BE USED ON AIRCRAFT.
YOU USE IT ON PEOPLE--
FUCKING BASTARD!
MY CREW!
FUCKING BASTARD!

YOU TURN THEM INTO PAINT.
COLONEL LUGANSKY, THEY'RE CHEWING THROUGH OUR PEOPLE LIKE A BUZZ-SAW, WE'RE GOING TO NEED REINFORCEMENTS FAST...
NO, SIR, THEY'VE MADE NO ATTEMPT TO LEAVE THE SILO. I THINK WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GO IN AFTER THEM.
MOSCOW COULD HAVE SPETSNAZ IN THE AIR INSIDE THE HOUR, SIR. AND THERE'S THE INFANTRY GARRISON DOWN THE ROAD AT RIDOSK.
JUST A MINUTE, I THINK SOMETHING'S HAPPENING...
FEED JAM.
I KNEW THIS THING WAS A WRECK.
NOW!!
CLOSE IN! SUPPRESSING FIRE! LET'S FLANK THIS PIECE OF SHIT!
NO TIME TO CLEAR IT.
OVER TO PLAN B.

ALL THE PLASTIQUE I COULD FIND.

SHIT...!
WAAAAH!
JESUS FUCK!!
REINFORCEMENTS, COLONEL! HERE! NOW!
EVERYONE!!

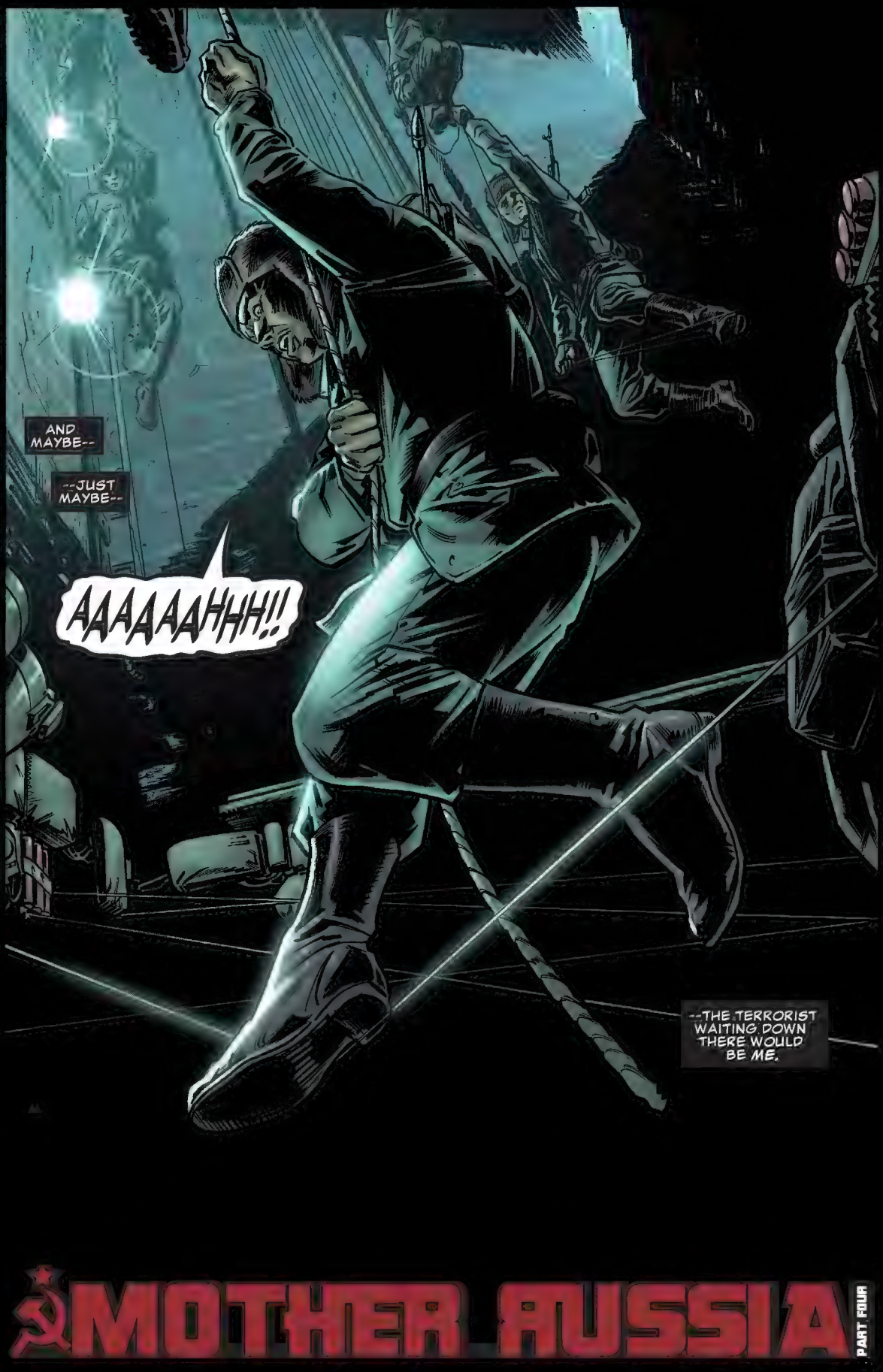
THE BOYS FROM RIDOSK, COLONEL. TWO BATTALIONS.
TOOK THEIR GODDAMNED TIME ABOUT IT, DIDN'T THEY? IT'S AN HOUR AND A HALF SINCE I MADE THE CALL...
AH, GENERAL ZAKHAROV, SIR? THE POLICE ARE DOWNSTAIRS WITH THOSE WITNESSES YOU ASKED FOR.
BRING THEM HERE.
YOU'RE STILL WORRYING ABOUT *THAT?*
WE'VE GOT A TERRORIST GROUP HOLDING A SILO FULL OF S.S.-18S, AND ALL YOU'RE INTERESTED IN IS SOME STUPID FIGHT IN A BAR?
FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, SEMYON, ACKNOWLEDGE HIS RANK. GENERAL ZAKHAROV, OR SIR.
LOOK--
OTHERWISE, YOUR NEW NAME IS CORPORAL EUNUCH.

THEY... THEY FOUGHT WELL, SIR. VERY DANGEROUS MEN.
THEY BEAT TEN KINDS OF SHIT OUT OF US.
WHAT DOES WELL MEAN?
BE PRECISE. HYSTERICAL BLEATING IS NO USE TO ME.
WELL, AH...AH...IT WAS A BRAWL, SIR. NOT A FANCY FIGHT LIKE IN A FILM.
BUT THESE TWO MEN KNEW JUST WHAT THEY WERE DOING--THEY WERE SO FAST, SO GOOD...
WHO STARTED IT?
THEY DID, SIR. THE BIG MAN DID IT.
DID YOU SEE THE TWO SOLDIERS FROM THIS BASE?
JUST WHEN THEY WALKED IN, SIR. NOT AFTER THE FIGHT STARTED.
WERE THEY ARABS? AFGHANS, MAYBE?
OH NO, SIR. THEY WERE THE SAME AS US.
WELL... NOT QUITE THE SAME AS US.
BUT THEY WERE WHITE...

UH?
FURY.
CALM DOWN, GENERAL...
THEY'VE DETECTED ACTIVITY AROUND THE SILO...I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU COULD KEEP NORAD OUT OF THIS?
WELL, TELL THEM TO GO TO DEFCON FOUR IF IT MAKES THEM FEEL ANY BETTER.
HHH.
CASTLE.

PUNISHER #16

IF I HAD TO WINKLE A TERRORIST UNIT OUT OF A MISSILE SILO, THE FIRST THING I'D DO WOULD BE TO TAKE A TEN-POUND BLOCK OF T.N.T. AND THROW IT DOWN THE ELEVATOR SHAFT.
I WOULDN'T BE TOO CONCERNED ABOUT THE NUKES. NOTHING MUCH SHORT OF ANOTHER NUKE IS GOING TO SET THEM OFF.
I'D FOLLOW THE T.N.T. WITH FIVE OR SIX SQUADS OF COMMANDOS, NONE BUT THE BEST, SPETSNAZ OR S.A.S. OR DELTA, WITH ORDERS TO KILL EVERYONE THEY FOUND DOWN THERE ON SIGHT.
OF COURSE, MAYBE IT WOULDN'T BE AS SIMPLE AS THAT.
MAYBE THERE'D BE A SIX-YEAR-OLD GIRL INSIDE THE SILO, WITH A LETHAL RETROVIRUS IN HER VEINS THAT I HAD ORDERS TO PRESERVE INTACT. MAYBE I COULDN'T START THROWING CHARGES AROUND, FOR FEAR OF KILLING HER.
MAYBE THERE WOULDN'T BE ANY COMMANDOS.
MAYBE I'D HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH WHAT I COULD GET.
WHAT'S--WAIT, I'M SNAGGED ON SOMETHING--
FLASHLIGHTS!



MOTHER AUSSIA

PART FOUR

WHAT WAS THAT?
RIGGED THE ELEVATOR SHAFT.
TOOK HALF AN HOUR EVEN TO GET THAT FAR. THEY OBVIOUSLY HAVEN'T GOT THE GUTS FOR THIS.
CAN WE GET OUT BEFORE THEY FIND SOMEONE WHO DOES?
NOT LOOKING TOO GOOD HERE, CASTLE.
ONLY WAY OUT'S THE ELEVATOR, ALONG WITH A LITTLE SERVICE SHAFT RUNNING PARALLEL TO THE MAIN ONE. NO WAY THEY WON'T HAVE THAT COVERED.
I DID HAVE ONE IDEA: IF WE CAN HOLD OFF A COUPLE MORE ASSAULTS JUST TO MAKE IT LOOK GOOD, THEN RIG CHARGES IN EVERY ROOM. BOOM, THEY COME IN, THEY FIND BODIES AND BLAST DAMAGE EVERYWHERE, TOTAL AND UTTER DESTRUCTION.
THEY JUST DON'T NOTICE THAT TWO OF THE BODIES AREN'T DEAD YET...
ONE PROBLEM WITH THAT.
YEAH? OH.
RIGHT.

GALINA LEAVES WITH US, VANHEIM. IT'S UP TO YOU TO FIND US A WAY OUT.
BUT THERE *ISN'T* ANY--
LOOK HARDER.
FRANK?
YES, GALINA?
CAN I GO TO THE ROOM WHERE THE REFRIGERATOR IS AND GET MYSELF SOME ICE CREAM?
NO, YOU STAY HERE. I'LL GO AND GET THE ICE CREAM FOR YOU.
YOU STAY IN THERE NO MATTER WHAT.

TOTAL FAILURE, COLONEL LUGANSKY.
SORRY.
RIGHT...
I DID NOT TELL YOU TO STOP, LIEUTENANT.
SIR, NO, SIR. I'M SORRY.
ALL I SAW WAS ONE MAN, GENERAL. A BIG FELLOW, LOADED DOWN WITH WEAPONRY. ONCE HE GOT THE MACHINE GUN ON THE TANK GOING--
RACE?
SIR?
WHITE, BLACK, ARAB, ASIAN.
AH...VERY DIFFICULT TO GUESS AT THAT RANGE, SIR. BUT... WHITE, IF I HAD TO GUESS.
DISMISSED.
I SEE THE AMERICAN THEORY REFUSES TO LIE DOWN AND DIE.
GENERAL ZAKHAROV, WHY DO YOU INSIST ON FOLLOWING THIS BIZARRE LINE OF INQUIRY? AND RIGHT NOW, GIVEN THAT THEY'VE GOT THE SILO AND THE GIRL, WHY DOES IT EVEN MATTER?
BECAUSE I FAIL TO SEE--
I KNOW.
BUT IT HASN'T STOPPED YOU MAKING COLONEL.

I BEG YOUR PARDON...?
I WILL INDULGE YOU ONLY ONCE, LUGANSKY.
WHY I BELIEVE IT: BECAUSE THEY'RE CAUCASIAN. THEY DON'T ANSWER OUR RADIO CALLS, NOT EVEN TO MAKE DEMANDS. THEY KNOW WE HAVE VOCAL ANALYSTS IN MOSCOW WHO COULD PLACE THEIR ORIGINS ALMOST TO THE CITY BLOCK.
BY NOW, AL QAEDA WOULD HAVE DETONATED THE WARHEADS AND TAKEN US ALL TO ALLAH. WITH NO WAY TO GET THE STENKOV GIRL PAST US, THEY'D HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN BY STALLING.
BUT THESE ARE MEN WHO WANT TO LIVE.
WHY IT MATTERS: BECAUSE IT INCREASES THE CHALLENGE FACING US A HUNDREDFOLD. AMERICANS ARE THE MOST CUNNING ENEMIES THAT OUR COUNTRY HAS EVER FACED.
ONE THING THESE MEN CANNOT DISGUISE IS JUST HOW GOOD THEY ARE. THEY WILL TRY EVERYTHING IMAGINABLE TO GET OUT OF THE SILO AND TAKE THE VIRUS WITH THEM.
SOUNDS LIKE SOMEBODY MISSES THE COLD WAR...
I MISS EXECUTING PEOPLE OUT OF HAND.
WRITING REPORTS WASTES EVERYBODY'S TIME.
MY COMRADE WILL BE JOINING THE NEXT ASSAULT. TELL THE GUARDS CAPTAIN TO EXPECT US; I WILL NEED ONE OF HIS MEN FOR A VERY SPECIFIC TASK.

NOW.
WHA--?
NO--
AAAAAH!!
GUN! GUN!

GET THE FUCKING GUN, DAMN YOU!!
OH-- OH MY--
AAAAAH!!
FUCK, NO, PLEASE--
GET OUT THERE QUICKLY. SEND TWO OF THE OTHERS TO HELP ME HERE.
WHAT THE FUCK...?
SILENCE!!
WHAT IS THIS?
I'M TELLING YOU, THAT WAS SOMEONE SCREAMING...

WE HAVE TAKEN CONTROL OF THE AIRCRAFT. STAY IN YOUR SEATS. WE WILL KILL YOU IF YOU TRY TO INTERFERE.
THE AIRCRAFT IS STILL ON COURSE TO MOSCOW. IF YOU ARE SENSIBLE YOU WILL ARRIVE ALIVE AT YOUR DESTINATION. STAY IN YOUR SEATS AND KEEP QUIET, AND YOU HAVE MY WORD THAT NO ONE WILL BE HURT.
OH, THIS IS BULLSHIT...!
YOU ALL KNOW WHAT THIS IS! YOU KNOW WHAT THEY'RE GONNA DO!
COME ON, WE GOTTA TAKE THESE BASTARDS! WE GOTTA FUCKIN' *RUSH* 'EM!
SIT DOWN!
IF YOU DOUBT MY WORDS, LOOK CLOSELY AT HIM.

AAAAAAHH!
RUSSIAN MILITARY NEVER WAS TOO SENTIMENTAL ABOUT SPENDING LIVES.
ALL THE SAME, THEY BETTER LOSE THEIR STOMACH FOR THIS BEFORE I RUN OUT OF AMMUNITION.
LONGER WE'VE GOT STALEMATE, THE MORE TIME VANHEIM'S GOT TO FIND AN EXIT.
COMING DOWN--
--I'M NOT TOO SENTIMENTAL EITHER.

YOU'RE NEXT! GO!
CAPTAIN, IT'S MURDER DOWN THERE--
ON THE FUCKING ROPE!
SIZE OF A BEAR, BALLS OF A QUEER!
YOU THREE! NEXT!
SHIT
SHIT
SHIT
WAAAAH--!

CAN'T LEAVE YOU BOYS ALONE FOR FIVE MINUTES, CAN I?
FURY--!
WHAT'S ALL THE SCREAMING ABOUT?
THE SCREAMING, COLONEL, IS ABOUT THAT HIRED SAVAGE OF YOURS STARTING A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT! THERE'S SOME KIND OF GODDAMNED FIREFIGHT GOING ON IN THE SILO AT SUHDEK!
WE'VE GOT RADIO INTERCEPTS WITH TALK OF MASS CASUALTIES! THE RUSSIANS HAVE SPECIAL FORCES IN THE AIR, E.T.A. INSIDE THE HOUR!
YOU TOLD US YOU COULD GET THIS DONE, FURY! DO YOU KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THE IVANS FIND OUT THAT WE SENT MEN TO PENETRATE THEIR NUCLEAR MISSILE SILO?!
GENERALS.
ACT YOUR FUCKING RANK FOR A MINUTE.
THE RUSSIANS AREN'T GOING TO FIND OUT SHIT. CASTLE AND THIS DELTA BOOTBOY OF YOURS KNOW WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF THEY LET THEMSELVES BE TAKEN ALIVE.
THEY WON'T.

IF THE WORST DOES HAPPEN THEY'RE JUST TWO MORE DEAD BODIES. THERE'S NOTHING TO PROVE THEY'RE ANYTHING OTHER THAN A COUPLE OF MERCS, PROBABLY OUT TO SELL THE VIRUS TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER.
BUT THE WORST WON'T HAPPEN. CASTLE WILL FINISH THE JOB. HE'LL FIGURE A WAY OUT OF THE SILO AND HE'LL BRING THE GIRL OUT WITH HIM, EVEN IF HE HAS TO SLAUGHTER HALF THE RUSSIAN ARMY TO DO IT.
YOU'LL GET YOUR VIRUS; AND THE RUSSIANS WILL BE NONE THE WISER.
ANYTHING ELSE, OR DO YOU THINK YOU CAN MANAGE ON YOUR OWN FOR A WHILE?
THIS ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH...
THANK GOD FOR RAWLINS' BOYS.
NO, THAT...
THAT'LL BE ALL, COLONEL FURY.
WE'LL CALL YOU IF WE NEED YOU.
MAKE SURE IT'S IMPORTANT NEXT TIME. THE WOMEN I LIKE CHARGE BY THE HOUR.

I STILL CAN'T--
UNNHH--!
YOU--YOU LITTLE COCKSUCKER--
I'LL KICK YOUR FUCKIN' ASS--
AAAAAHH!

OH NO.
OH NO.
F--
F--
F--
FRAAAAAANNNK!!

SIR? EXCUSE ME, SIR.
IT'S STARTING.
GULF SOUTH TWO-NINER JUST DROPPED TO FIVE HUNDRED FEET. VNUKOVO A.T.C.'S GONE FRANTIC.
RAWLINS' TEAM AREN'T RESPONDING TO CALLS, JUST LIKE HE TOLD THEM.
FORTY MILES TO MOSCOW. LOCKED ON COURSE, IT'S UNMISTAKABLE NOW.
OKAY, NEW INTERCEPT: THE KREMLIN'S TALKING TO DEFENSE COMMAND. S.A.M. BATTERY AT TROITSK IS STANDING BY.
TWO-NINER SHOULD START TRANSMITTING ANY MOMENT.

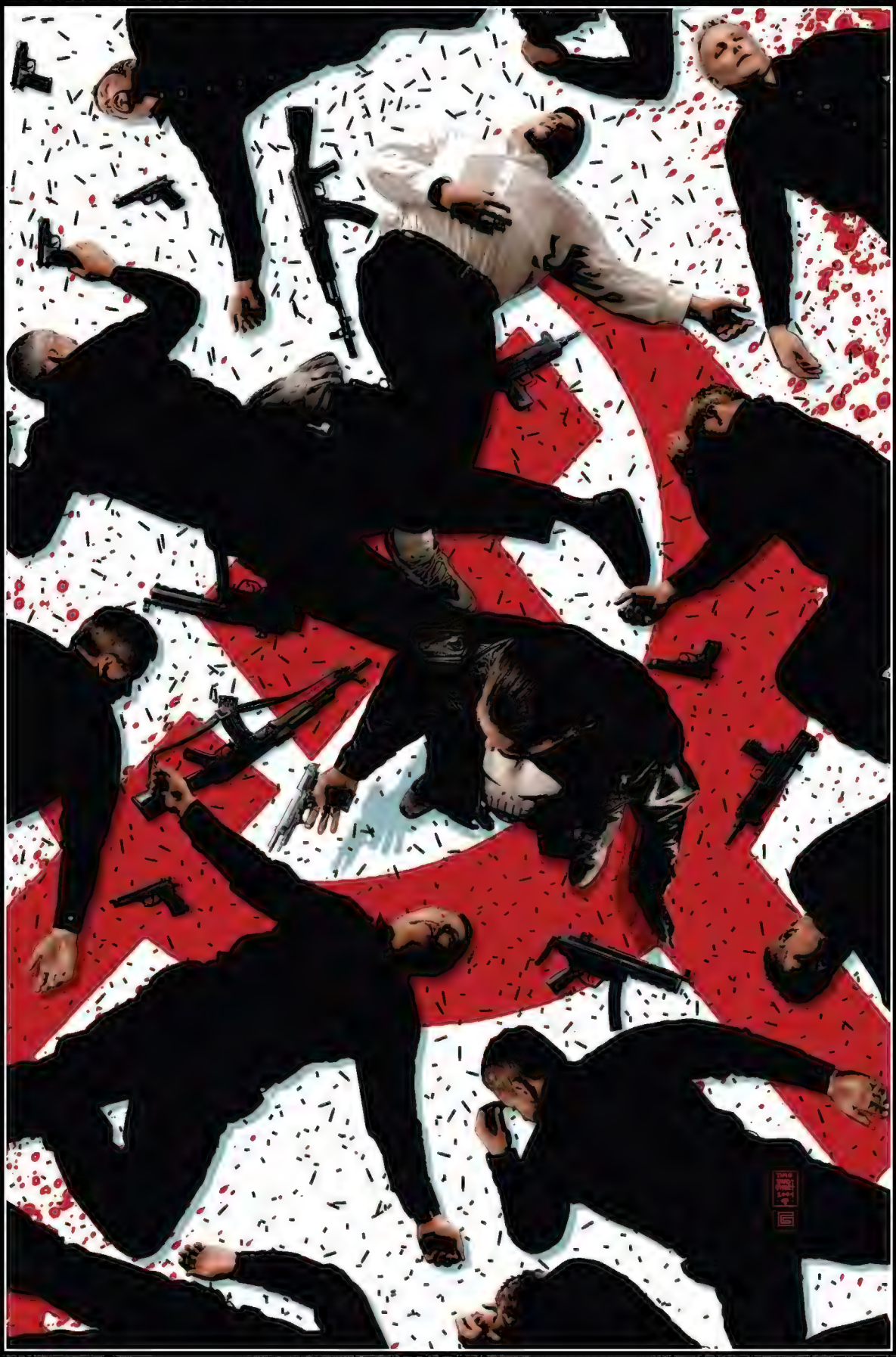
THOSE WHO MAKE WAR ON ISLAM WILL SUFFER THE WRATH OF ALLAH! THOSE WHO STAND WITH THE GREAT SATAN WILL DIE WITH THE GREAT SATAN!
WORD PERFECT. BOY'S LEARNED HIS LINES.
NOT A WORD FROM THE RUSSIANS, YOU COULD HEAR A PIN DROP ON THOSE FREQUENCIES.
GLORY TO OUR BROTHERS IN THE JIHAD AGAINST AMERICA! GLORY TO OUR BROTHERS WHO EVEN NOW MAKE WAR ON AMERICA'S ALLIES!
BEFORE THIS DAY IS OUT, YOU WILL LEARN AND LEARN AGAIN THE PRICE OF FRIENDSHIP WITH OUR ENEMY!
TROITSK HAVE LOCKED ON.
DEFENSE COMMAND ARE SCREAMING AT THE KREMLIN.
ALLAH AKBAR! GOD IS GREAT!!
SIR--
THE BATTERY COMMANDER AT TROITSK JUST GOT THE ORDER TO FIRE.

VANHEIM?
VANHEIM?
FRANK?
FRANK?
PLEASE?
I'M HERE, GALINA.
IT'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.

FIGHT'S HIS.
BUT I KNEW THAT THREE SECONDS AGO.

SEVENTEEN MINUTES.
HE'LL BE DONE BY NOW.
HE WILL?
TELL YOUR MEN THEY CAN ENTER THE SILO. THEY'LL HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT THIS TIME.
AND HAVE THE PRISONERS BROUGHT TO ME IMMEDIATELY.
AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, THE COLD WAR MAY YET BE TURNING HOT.

PUNISHER #17



MOTHER RUSSIA

PART FIVE

SIR, THE OTHERS--
I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OTHERS.
BUT WHY WILL THIS BE ANY DIFFERENT?
BECAUSE GENERAL ZAKHAROV SAYS SO, SOLDIER.
THE MAN OF STONE HIMSELF.
HIS WORD IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.
OH MY GOD.
WHAT IS IT?
PRIORITY FAX FROM MOSCOW. A SAUDI AIRLINER WAS JUST SHOT DOWN ON ITS APPROACH TO VNUKOVO AIRPORT; THIS IS A TRANSCRIPT OF ITS LAST TRANSMISSION.
LISTEN TO THIS: GLORY TO OUR BROTHERS WHO EVEN NOW MAKE WAR ON AMERICA'S ALLIES. BEFORE THIS DAY IS OUT YOU WILL LEARN AND LEARN AGAIN THE PRICE OF FRIENDSHIP WITH OUR ENEMY.
EVEN *NOW* MAKE WAR. LEARN AND LEARN *AGAIN.*
IT'S US. IT'S WHAT'S GOING ON HERE, THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT, IT'S SOME KIND OF FOLLOW-UP STRIKE TO THE THING WITH THE PLANE.
I MEAN, DEAR FUCKING JESUS, THESE BASTARDS WERE *AL QAEDA...!*
THEY WERE OR THEY SAID THEY WERE?

OH, FUCK ME...!
GENERAL, SIR, THE EVIDENCE IS RIGHT HERE! MOSCOW BELIEVES IT, OR THEY WOULDN'T HAVE SENT THIS THROUGH!
MOSCOW IS FULL OF MENTAL PYGMIES. THE SAME KIND THEY SEND TO RUN THEIR MISSILE SILOS.
AS OPPOSED TO WHAT? SOME BURNED-OUT JOKE THEY SHOULD HAVE PUT OUT TO GRASS IN NINETEEN EIGHTY-NINE?
SEMYON--!
OH NO, GRIGORI, THIS LEGEND OF YOURS IS NOW GOING TO TELL US HOW A GANG OF SUICIDAL ARABS WERE ACTUALLY AMERICANS IN DISGUISE!
A DISGUISE THEY WERE SO COMMITTED TO, BY THE WAY, THAT THEY PLAINLY THOUGHT--WELL, IT WOULDN'T BE TOO CONVINCING IF WE DIDN'T KILL OURSELVES, WOULD IT? I MEAN YOU'VE REALLY GOT TO HAND IT TO THEM. THAT'S WHAT I CALL METHOD FUCKING ACTING!
WHAT I AM GOING TO TELL YOU IS THIS.
FOR SEVENTY YEARS WE STRUGGLED TO CONVINCE THE WORLD THAT COMMUNISM WAS ITS ONLY CHANCE. THE AMERICANS CHOSE A DIFFERENT ROUTE: THEY BOMBED WHOLE COUNTRIES FLAT, THEN BUILT MCDONALD'S RESTAURANTS IN THE PLACES THAT WERE LEFT.
THEY WON.
THEY ARE A CLEVER AND TENACIOUS PEOPLE. THEY ARE ALSO ENORMOUSLY IMAGINATIVE.
IF YOU CANNOT BELIEVE THEY WOULD GO TO SUCH LENGTHS TO THROW US OFF THE SCENT, YOU ARE NO BETTER THAN A GOATHERDER CHOKING ON A QUARTER-POUNDER.
THE PRISONERS WILL BE WITH US SHORTLY.
THEN WE'LL SEE.

I TRY
AND I TRY
AND I TRY.
BUT I JUST CAN'T GET UP.
DON'T THINK I'VE BEEN HIT HARDER THAN THIS IN MY WHOLE LIFE.
FAR, FAR AWAY I HEAR A LITTLE GIRL'S VOICE.
I KNOW THAT SHOULD MEAN SOMETHING.
AM I SUPPOSED TO HELP HER?
OR IS IT THAT I ALREADY FAILED?
P-P-PLEASE?
THEY'RE GOING TO DO MORE TESTS ON ME...THEY'RE GOING TO REALLY, REALLY HURT ME...!
I DON'T WANT
AAAAAHH!!
IS IT
THAT I
ALREADY

FAILED?

I'M TWISTING HIS LEG OFF LIKE A DRUMSTICK WHEN I REALIZE I'M FRIGHTENING THE KID.

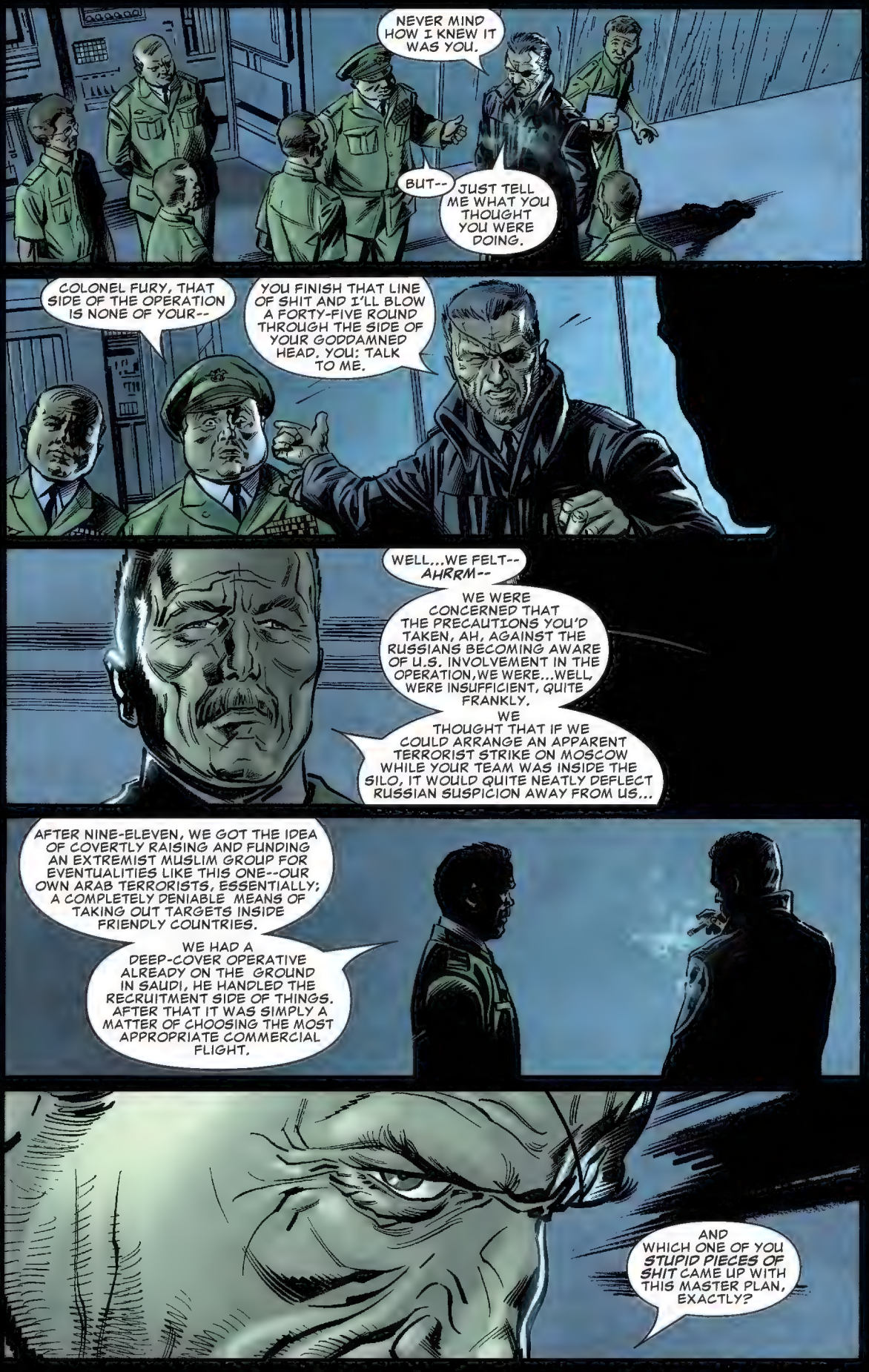
GALINA.
I PROMISED.
...RIGHT.
FRANK--!
FRANK.
RIGHT.

ALL RIGHT!
I TOLD YOU SO, I FUCKING TOLD YOU SO!
WE DID IT, BOYS!
WE HIT IT RIGHT OUT OF THE PARK!
WE--
WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU ASSHOLES JUST DO?

IS HE ALL RIGHT?
HE'S ALIVE.
THERE'S MORE MEN COMING...
YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THEM.
DO YOU WANT ME TO HELP?
GALINA, PUT THAT DOWN. RIGHT NOW.
O-O-OKAY--!
YOU NEVER PLAY WITH GUNS, GALINA.
WHAT DO YOU NEVER DO?
PLAY WITH GUNS...?
THAT'S RIGHT.

THESE BAGS HAVE OUR PARACHUTES AND COATS PACKED INSIDE. THEY'RE GOOD AND THICK, THEY'LL PROTECT YOU IF THERE'S ANY SHOOTING INSIDE THIS ROOM.
OKAY...
YOU'RE GOING TO HEAR SOME VERY LOUD NOISES NOW, GALINA. I WANT YOU TO LIE ON THE FLOOR, COVER YOUR EARS AND KEEP YOUR MOUTH OPEN. THAT WAY THE NOISE WON'T HURT YOU.
I'LL BE BACK IN A MINUTE.
I THOUGHT THEY'D BEEN SUBDUED ALREADY...
JUST IN CASE.
MISTER?
UHHH...!

JESUS!!
WAAH--!
MOVE, DAMN YOU--
ZAKHAROV! ZAKHAROV, YOU PRICK!
YOU TOLD US HE WAS--
ARE YOU OKAY?
FUCK.
OH, FUCK.
GAME OVER.
SORRY, KID.


NEVER MIND HOW I KNEW IT WAS YOU.
BUT--
JUST TELL ME WHAT YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE DOING.
COLONEL FURY, THAT SIDE OF THE OPERATION IS NONE OF YOUR--
YOU FINISH THAT LINE OF SHIT AND I'LL BLOW A FORTY-FIVE ROUND THROUGH THE SIDE OF YOUR GODDAMNED HEAD. YOU: TALK TO ME.
WELL...WE FELT-- AHRRM--
WE WERE CONCERNED THAT THE PRECAUTIONS YOU'D TAKEN, AH, AGAINST THE RUSSIANS BECOMING AWARE OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THE OPERATION, WE WERE...WELL, WERE INSUFFICIENT, QUITE FRANKLY.
WE THOUGHT THAT IF WE COULD ARRANGE AN APPARENT TERRORIST STRIKE ON MOSCOW WHILE YOUR TEAM WAS INSIDE THE SILO, IT WOULD QUITE NEATLY DEFLECT RUSSIAN SUSPICION AWAY FROM US...
AFTER NINE-ELEVEN, WE GOT THE IDEA OF COVERTLY RAISING AND FUNDING AN EXTREMIST MUSLIM GROUP FOR EVENTUALITIES LIKE THIS ONE--OUR OWN ARAB TERRORISTS, ESSENTIALLY; A COMPLETELY DENIABLE MEANS OF TAKING OUT TARGETS INSIDE FRIENDLY COUNTRIES.
WE HAD A DEEP-COVER OPERATIVE ALREADY ON THE GROUND IN SAUDI, HE HANDLED THE RECRUITMENT SIDE OF THINGS. AFTER THAT IT WAS SIMPLY A MATTER OF CHOOSING THE MOST APPROPRIATE COMMERCIAL FLIGHT.
AND WHICH ONE OF YOU *STUPID PIECES OF SHIT* CAME UP WITH THIS MASTER PLAN, EXACTLY?

ER...
NOW... COLONEL...
YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE STAKES WERE SIMPLY TOO HIGH FOR US TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER ALTERNATIVE...
I MEAN WE KNEW THERE WAS NO CHANCE OF THE PLANE DOING ANY DAMAGE--THE MOSCOW MISSILE DEFENSES ARE NOTORIOUS...
OUR B-52 PILOTS USED TO LIVE IN TERROR OF THEM... UM...
COLONEL FURY?
AAAAAAHH!!
MOTHERFUCKER!
YOU MOTHERFUCKER! YOU COCKSUCKER! YOU INHUMAN, GODLESS LITTLE FUCK!!
EEEEIIIIGGGHHH!!

C-C-COLONEL FURY, FOR GOD'S SAKE--!
CALL THE M.P.S! NOW!
STOP! PLEASE! HEEEEEELLLLPP!!
TOUCH THAT PHONE AND YOU'RE NEXT, PISSANT!
YOU CALLOUS FUCKING MAGGOTS, WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE ON THAT PLANE? WHAT THE FUCK HAVE YOU MADE ME A PART OF?
THIS BRAINWAVE OF YOURS--YOU REALLY THINK THE RUSSIANS WON'T SEE THROUGH IT? YOU THINK THEY'RE ALL SUCH FUCKING MORONS, NOT A SINGLE ONE OF THEM WILL REALIZE SOMETHING STINKS?
YOU PISS THEM OFF THIS MUCH AND THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT THEY'LL DO. RIGHT NOW THE WHOLE COUNTRY'S SHITTING ITSELF--ONE MORE SHOVE IN THE WRONG DIRECTION, AND THEY WON'T GIVE A FUCK WHAT THEY CAN PROVE OR NOT.
YOU BETTER PRAY CASTLE GETS OUT OF THAT SILO SOON, YOU ASSHOLES--
BECAUSE I'M ALL OUT OF IDEAS.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
UH--
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
LOOK, WAIT A MINUTE, OKAY?
CASTLE-- CASTLE, BACK OFF. I MEAN IT.
DON'T MAKE ME FUCK YOU UP--
FFFFFF FUCK--

AAAAH--!
CASTLE, WAIT! I'VE GOT ORDERS! AAACCHH!
UHV
GUHD
UHDUHHH
TELL ME.
SECONDARY PROTOCOL.
KILL THE KID AND BRING HER BLOOD OUT.

WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME. THE ANTIDOTE IN HER SYSTEM'S DESTROYING THE BARBAROSSA VIRUS; PRETTY SOON IT'LL BE LOST FOR GOOD.
THE YELLOW SHIT'S SOME SORT OF STABILIZER. IT STOPS THE ANTIDOTE FROM BREAKING DOWN THE VIRUS, BUT IT HAS THE SECONDARY EFFECT OF KILLING HER.
IF THINGS GOT BAD, I WAS SUPPOSED TO INJECT HER WITH THE STABILIZER AND THEN TAKE A SAMPLE OF HER BLOOD. EASIER FOR ONE OF US TO GET OUT WITH A HYPO IN HIS POCKET THAN TWO OF US WITH A LITTLE GIRL.
THAT'S WHY I THOUGHT BLOWING THE PLACE TO HELL AND PLAYING DEAD WOULD WORK BEST FOR US...
FURY?
HE DOESN'T KNOW.
THE ORDER CAME FROM THE GENERALS WHO BROUGHT HIM IN, THEY KNEW HE'D NEVER GO FOR IT. IT'S WHY THEY INSISTED ON ME COMING ALONG.
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT. I'M A SOLDIER, I'M MEANT TO FOLLOW ORDERS.
I COULDN'T SEE ANY WAY OUT OF HERE, I WAS SURE THEY WERE ABOUT TO TAKE US DOWN. I STILL DON'T SEE THAT WE HAVE ANY OTHER CHOICE.
DELTA FORCE, BEST OF THE BEST.
YOU'LL DO WHAT IT TAKES TO GET THE JOB DONE.
OH, FUCK YOU, CASTLE...
I NEED TO KNOW IF IT'S STILL TRUE.

...YEAH.
YEAH, IT IS. YOU'RE GODDAMN RIGHT IT IS.
WHY?
YOU WENT THROUGH THEIR COMPUTER HERE. YOU HAD IT ALL TO YOURSELF FOR HOURS.
I TOLD YOU, THERE'S NO OTHER WAY OUT LISTED...
YOU KNOW THE SYSTEM, IS THE POINT.
YEAH...I MEAN IT'S A JOKE, IT'S ALMOST TOTALLY OBSOLETE. IF YOU CAN USE AN *iPOD* YOU'RE OVERQUALIFIED FOR THIS THING.
GO-CODES.
YOU'VE GOT THIRTY S.S.-18s IN SILO. GET ON A TERMINAL AND CHANGE THE TARGETS TO MAJOR CITIES IN RUSSIA.
THEN FIRE UP THE NUKES FOR LAUNCH.
WHAT?

NO AMERICAN HAS THE GUTS FOR NUCLEAR WAR.
THEY HAVE THE EGO FOR NUCLEAR CONFRONTATION, YES. THEY WILL FRY A HUNDRED THOUSAND JAPANESE, SO LONG AS THERE IS NO QUESTION OF RETALIATION. BUT OUTRIGHT WAR IS A STEP TOO FAR FOR THEM.
THAT IS WHY WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR TODAY.
I'M GLAD TO HEAR IT. I WAS A LITTLE CONCERNED WHEN YOUR INFALLIBLE SUPER-HOBBIT FUCKED THINGS UP AND LEFT THE TERRORISTS STILL IN CONTROL OF THE SILO.
THAT IS NOT WHAT THEY ARE.
THEY ARE AMERICANS. THEY HAVE GONE TO INSANE LENGTHS TO CONVINCE US OTHERWISE, BUT THAT IS WHAT THEY ARE.
DETONATING THE WARHEADS WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY MEAN A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THIS COUNTRY AND THE U.S.A. THAT IS SOMETHING THEY SIMPLY WILL NOT RISK.
AND YOU ARE TRULY CONVINCED OF THIS?
SIR!!

...GODDAMN RIGHT THEY KNOW NOW. THEY'RE SCREAMING RAPE FROM MINSK TO FUCKING MOSCOW, AS OF ABOUT TEN SECONDS AGO.
I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE?
SAINT PETERSBURG, VORKUTA, VOLGOGRAD! I DON'T KNOW HOW THEY'RE DOING THIS!
AUTOFUELLING HAS COMMENCED-- AFTER THAT THEY'RE THREE MINUTES AWAY FROM LAUNCH. CHRIST, THEY CAN GO WHENEVER THEY WANT!
READY WHEN YOU ARE.
OH MY GOD.
OH MY GOD, IT'S FROM THEM.
To the officer commanding the I.C.B.M. silo at Suhdek:

"YOU WILL PULL ALL YOUR FORCES BACK BEYOND THE BASE PERIMETER.
"YOU WILL GUARANTEE OUR SAFE PASSAGE FROM THE SILO ENTRANCE TO THE GORY BYRRANGA MOUNTAINS.
"NO ATTEMPT IS TO BE MADE TO FOLLOW US. NO SURVEILLANCE OF ANY KIND WILL BE PERMITTED.
"THERE WILL BE NO FURTHER COMMUNICATION FROM THIS SOURCE. NO NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE ENTERED INTO.
"IF YOU DO NOT IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY AGREE TO THESE TERMS--
"I WILL BURN RUSSIA AND ITS PEOPLE FROM OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH."

ВОЕННЫЙ
ПЕРСОНАЛ
ТОЛЬКО
ГЛАВНАЯ СТУПЕ
ДОСТУП КРЫШИ
3
В ДО 7

MOTHER RUSSIA

PART SIX

RIGHT--
NO ONE'S REBOOTING ANYTHING HERE.
GALINA, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO NOW IS HOLD ON TIGHT TO ME. DO YOU THINK YOU CAN DO THAT?
YES...
WHAT'S THE TIMING ON THIS?
WE'VE GOT TEN MINUTES TO GET OVER THERE. TWO MINUTES AFTER THAT-- WELL.
PROGRAM'S SET AND LOCKED NOW, CASTLE. I HOPE TO GOD YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING.
I'M DOING THE ONE THING NO ONE'S TRIED YET.
I'M GAMBLING THE RUSSIANS AREN'T STUPID.

FUELLING COMPLETE, ALL WARHEADS ACTIVATED. I...
I THINK THEY'RE ACTUALLY GOING TO DO THIS.
GENERAL ZAKHAROV, IT'S MOSCOW! THEY WANT AN IMMEDIATE STATUS REPORT!
TELL THEM TO STAND BY.
STAND BY?
I AM IN COMMAND HERE, COLONEL LUGANSKY. THE NEXT TIME I TELL YOU SO WILL BE AT GUNPOINT.
FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, WHAT WILL IT TAKE BEFORE SANITY PREVAILS? WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO MAKE YOU ACT?
CONTACT THE TERRORISTS! AGREE TO THEIR DEMANDS, IF ONLY TEMPORARILY! DO IT NOW, BEFORE EVERYTHING WE CARE ABOUT IS LOST!
OH NO.
OH GOD.
THIS IS IT.

FINAL LAUNCH SEQUENCE IS GO. WE CAN'T GET INTO THE SYSTEM, THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO.
PRIMARY IGNITION ANY TIME NOW.
LAUNCH ALTITUDE ACHIEVED. MAIN ENGINE IGNITION IN FIVE SECONDS.
FOUR.
THREE.
TWO.
ONE.

WH...
WHAT'S THE TARGET?

IT'S INBOUND ON MOSCOW! NORAD ARE SAYING--
TELL THOSE PUSSIES TO HOLD THEIR NERVE.
CASTLE, YOU CRAZY SON OF A BITCH.

GENERAL ZAKHAROV, IT'S MOSCOW AGAIN.
THEY KNOW IT'S COMING, SIR.
GENERAL ZAKHAROV...?
TELL THEM THEY NEED TAKE NO ACTION. THE SITUATION IS UNDER CONTROL.
TELL THEM *NIKOLAI ALEXANDROVICH ZAKHAROV* GIVES THEM HIS *WORD.*
WHAT IN THE NAME OF GOD ARE YOU DOING?

THE AMERICANS WILL NOT BEGIN A NUCLEAR WAR.
A... AM...?
THEY ARE AMERICANS, BUT IF I TELL MOSCOW THAT, THE FOOLS WILL PUT AN END TO THE WORLD.
SO WE DO NOTHING.
NO!!
THEY ARE ARAB TERRORISTS! THAT MISSILE IS ON ITS WAY TO OBLITERATE OUR NATION'S CAPITAL!
GENERAL ZAKHAROV, YOUR DELUSIONS HAVE GONE FAR ENOUGH! FOR THE SAKE OF OUR MOTHERLAND I AM HEREBY RELIEVING YOU OF COMMAND!
GIVE ME THAT FUCKING PHONE--
SEMYON--!

ANYTHING TO SAY?
SIR?
SIR, THE MISSILE'S ENGINES HAVE CUT OUT. IT MADE EIGHT THOUSAND FEET, AND...IT...

JESUS CHRIST, THE WARHEAD'S JUST DEACTIVATED.
HOW?
THE WEAPON DOES WHATEVER IT WAS PROGRAMMED TO DO PREFLIGHT. IT'S JUST A HARMLESS STEEL TUBE NOW, IT'LL COME DOWN ABOUT TEN MILES FROM HERE.
SIR, WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?
OUR OPPONENT IS A MAN OF EXTREMES, BUT HE IS NOT THE TYPE TO MURDER MILLIONS.
NO MORE THAN I AM, IN THE END.

IF THE THOUGHT OF IT SEEMS CRAZY--
YOU WEREN'T CRAZY ENOUGH TO BEGIN WITH.

IT'S DOWN. IT'S PROBABLY SITTING IN A SNOWDRIFT SOMEWHERE.
HOLY DEAR LORD GOD ABOVE US ALL...!
MAJOR YEREMIN, YOU WILL PROBABLY WANT TO INFORM MOSCOW.
OF COURSE, GENERAL.
AND ORGANIZE A SEARCH. TWENTY-MILE RADIUS, PAYING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE COAST.
PROBABLY A WASTE OF TIME WITH THE BLIZZARD THE WAY IT IS, BUT IF THEY'VE DONE WHAT I THINK THEY'VE DONE...
GENERAL ZAKHAROV... SIR, YOU WERE RIGHT.
YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT EVERYTHING, ALL ALONG.
IN EVERY DETAIL BUT ONE.
THAT WAS NO AMERICAN.
IT WAS A RUSSIAN WHO WAS BORN THERE BY MISTAKE.

C-C-CASTLE?
THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T GOING TO MAKE IT.
SLIPSTREAM TORE MY PACK OFF. WEAPON, TOO.
CAN'T BELIEVE HOW COLD IT IS...!
BE MINUS TWENTY BY NIGHTFALL. SEAL PICKUP'S TEN MILES THAT WAY.
YOU LOST YOUR BACKPACK, WE'VE ONLY ONE COAT BETWEEN US.
CASTLE, WE'LL BE DEAD IN TEN MINUTES WITHOUT WARM CLOTHING... UH...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

YOU DRAW THE LONG ONE, YOU TAKE GALINA AND GO ALL OUT FOR THE COAST.
DON'T LOOK BACK.
YOU'RE NOT SERIOUS...!
WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET THE JOB DONE, VANHEIM.
MAYBE NOW YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.

CASTLE.
FURY.
AND I GUESS THIS WOULD BE GALINA.
WHAT?!
SIR, THE SILVERFISH'S COMMANDER DECIDED TO DEFER TO A HIGHER AUTHORITY... HE SAID IT WASN'T A NAVAL OPERATION, STRICTLY SPEAKING...
FURY, YOU COCKSUCKER! DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS LUNATIC SON OF A BITCH DID?!

THE SEALS GOT THEM ABOARD THE SUB--AND HE WOULDN'T LET ANYONE NEAR THE GIRL! WE HAD SPECIALIST MEDICS READY TO TAKE BLOOD SAMPLES, AND HE WOULDN'T FUCKING LET THEM STICK HER!
HE STOOD OVER HER THE WHOLE FUCKING WAY TO ALASKA!
WHICH MEANS THE ANTIDOTE KILLED THE VIRUS IN HER SYSTEM TWO DAYS AGO--
WHICH MEANS THE WHOLE OPERATION WAS A WASTE OF FUCKING TIME!
TRUE?
PROMISED I WOULDN'T LET ANYONE HURT HER.
THAT SOUNDS FAIR ENOUGH TO ME.
WIN SOME, LOSE SOME, GENERAL.
LIEUTENANT.
SIR?
ESCORT COLONEL FURY OFF THE BASE. CLAP THIS OTHER PIECE OF SHIT IN IRONS.
AND TAKE THE GIRL TO THE SICK BAY IMMEDIATELY. THERE MAY BE RESIDUALS IN HER SYSTEM, WE COULD STILL SAVE BARBAROSSA YET...
THAT ISN'T GOING TO WORK.

PAH!
YOU MEN!
NOW, AH...WE DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO DO THIS THE HARD WAY...
JUST A MINUTE THERE, LIEUTENANT.
ANY TIME YOU LIKE.
GENERAL?

I'LL SEND EVERY ONE OF YOU FAGGOTS TO FUCKING ROT IN IRAQ--
THAT IS FINE BY US, GENERAL...
THINK ONE OF THE IVANS FIGURED OUT WHO WE WERE. I WAS EVEN KIND OF COUNTING ON IT, TOWARDS THE END.
SO LONG AS THEY HAVEN'T GOT PROOF, I COULDN'T CARE LESS.
AND THEM?
I'M ON SCARIER LISTS THAN THEIRS, CASTLE.
DOESN'T SEEM TO BOTHER YOU MUCH, THE VIRUS BEING DESTROYED.
'MATTER OF FACT, A SUSPICIOUS MAN MIGHT THINK YOU SET THE WHOLE THING UP JUST TO PULL GALINA OUT OF THAT HOLE.
I CAN SEE HOW YOU MIGHT THINK THAT. SEEING AS I SENT THE ONE MAN WHO COULD GET IN AND OUT OF THE PLACE, BUT WHO WOULDN'T DREAM OF KILLING A KID.
WOULD HAVE GONE IN MYSELF, BUT I NEEDED TO KEEP AN EYE ON THE GENERALS. NOT THAT I DID A VERY GOOD JOB OF IT.
NONE OF THIS WOULD'VE HAPPENED WITHOUT THEIR RESOURCES... WHICH REMINDS ME, THEY'LL HAVE HAD ALL THOSE PASSWORDS I PROMISED YOU CHANGED.
SO NOBODY WINS TODAY.
CHALK IT UP TO EXPERIENCE, I GUESS.

GALINA, THIS MAN'S GOING TO TAKE YOU TO PEOPLE WHO'LL LOOK AFTER YOU. HE'LL MAKE SURE THAT NOTHING BAD HAPPENS TO YOU.
NO!!
WHY, FRANK, WHY? DON'T LEAVE ME! PLEASE, PLEASE, DON'T!
I WANT YOU TO LOOK AFTER ME, FRANK! I WANT IT TO BE YOU!
I CAN'T, GALINA.
I CAN'T LOOK AFTER ANYONE.
WHAT DO YOU NEVER DO, GALINA?
P... PLAY WITH GUNS?
GOOD GIRL.

THE GENERALS CRAWL BACK INTO THEIR HOLES, INTENT ON BURYING BARBAROSSA IN THE DEEPEST, DARKEST EYES-ONLY FILE THEY'VE GOT. DON'T KNOW IF THEY'LL BE PISSED ENOUGH TO EVER COME AND FUCK WITH ME.

THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT KEEPS THE SILO BUSINESS UNDER WRAPS, WHICH ISN'T DIFFICULT ONCE THE SCREAMING STARTS ABOUT THE AIRLINER. ALL THE SAME, SOMEONE FIGURED OUT WE WEREN'T AL QAEDA: SOMEONE WHO MIGHT COME LOOKING FOR ME, SOME DAY.

I'M GOING THROUGH THE STUFF I CARRIED OUT OF SUHDEK WHEN SOMETHING HEAVY HITS THE FLOOR. MUST HAVE STUFFED IT IN MY COAT, AFTER I KILLED THE BIG GUY IN THE BAR.

I SLEEP FOR THREE DAYS STRAIGHT AND THEN I TAKE A WALK THROUGH BRIGHTON BEACH.

OH, JESUS.
I-I HAVEN'T TOUCHED A HAIR ON HIS HEAD--
THAT'S NOT WHY I'M HERE.
CRASH PLANE INTO SHITTY BAR, FOR ALL I-- HEYYYYY!!
RETURN OF THE GOOD VODKA! POUR AWAY, SHITTY BARMAN! POUR AWAY!
MAYBE ALL IS NOT LOST YET, EH?
MAYBE THERE IS HOPE FOR MOTHERLAND, AFTER ALL.
THE END

PUNISHER #19

Up is Down and Black is White

Part One

HOW YA WANNA DO THIS?
THROW ALL THE DIRT ON ONE SIDE. LEAVE SOME SPACE SO WE CAN LAY EVERYTHING OUT NICE AN' CLEAR. I WANNA GET IT INNA SAME SHOT AS THE HEADSTONE.
YOU GOT IT, MISTER CAVELLA.
MARIA ELIZABETH CASTLE 1948 - 1976
LISA CASTLE 1967 - 1976
FRANK DAVID CASTLE 1971 - 1976
NICKY, KIDDO.
NICKY.

MARIA ELIZABETH CASTLE
1948 - 1976
LISA CASTLE
1967 - 1976
FRANK DAVID CASTLE
1971 - 1976
I KNOW HOW TO GET YOU, YOU SON OF A BITCH.
I FINALLY FIGURED IT OUT.

UHHN!!

INMATE
WHOOFF!!
FUCKIN' BITCH--
CUT YOUR FUCKIN' NIPPLES OFF, WHORE--
RRAAAHH!
...NOW THEN.

I TOLD YOU BITCHES THE LAST TIME: THE DAY I EAT PUSSY IS THE DAY I GO OUT OF HERE IN A BAG. YOU CAN FIGURE OUT IF I'M PLAYING HARD TO GET WHILE YOU'RE LYING ON YOUR ASSES IN THE INFIRMARY.
WHERE YOU GOING, MARCIE?
YOU GOING SOMEWHERE?
AHHHH!
INMATE
YOU PROBABLY STILL THINK YOU'RE HOT SHIT, JUST 'CAUSE YOU'VE GOT ALL THE OTHER IDIOTS IN HERE SCARED TO DEATH OF YOU. F.Y.I., LADIES: I KNOW SCARY. I'VE SEEN SCARY.
SCARY GETS ME WET.
YOU THREE DON'T EVEN COME CLOSE.
YOU'RE-- YOU'RE DEAD, O'BRIEN--
YOU ARE FUCKING DEAD--

MOROCCO · COFFEE
OH, YOU FUCKERS.
YOU LOUSY, MISERABLE FUCKERS.
COFFEE
FREE
TIPS
COME ON, NOBODY EVER DOES ONE LAST JOB.
YOU'RE IN THIS FOR LIFE, YOU KNOW THAT BETTER THAN ANYONE.
...LOWDOWN, WORTHLESS, COCKSUCKIN', BACKSTABBIN'...
DON'T YOU HAVE SHARES IN THIS, OR SOMETHING?
GOT A DAUGHTER ON THE BOARD, AS I RECALL.
TELL HER THE WARM ICED LATTE TASTES LIKE SHIT.
CAN WE FORGET ABOUT YOUR GODDAMN FAGACCINO FOR A MOMENT, AN' GET BACK TO THE BUSINESS OF FUCKIN' UP MY LIFE FOREVER?
'COURSE WE CAN, RAWLINS.
'COURSE WE CAN.

I DON'T BELIEVE YOU PEOPLE. I PULL OFF THE SLICKEST JOB IN COMPANY HISTORY-- I MEAN I SET UP A TERRORIST UNIT INSIDE SAUDI AN' SEND 'EM TO CRASH A PLANE INTO GODDAMNED MOSCOW, ALL *WITHOUT* THE DUMB SHITS KNOWIN' THEY WERE WORKIN' FOR YOU--
AN' *THIS* IS THE FUCKIN' THANKS I GET?
WELL, AS I SAID EARLIER, WE HAD A LITTLE BIT OF FALLOUT FROM THAT OPERATION...
NOT FROM MY END, YOU DIDN'T.
NO ONE'S DISPUTING THAT. YOU'RE THE BEST WE'VE GOT; IF THIS THING WASN'T SO DAMNED IMPORTANT WE'D NEVER HAVE RISKED YOUR INVOLVEMENT.
BUT IT IS--SO WE DID.
I HEARD OL' NICKY FURY WHIPPED YOUR ASS ALL OVER THE OPS ROOM AT RHODE ISLAND, BOBBY. BRIGHTENED UP MY DAY CONSIDERABLY, LET ME TELL YOU.
YOU WILL REFER TO ME AS *SIR* OR *GENERAL*, THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
I WILL REFER TO YOU AS SUCK MY DICK, YOU LITTLE PISSANT. AN' DON'T YOU BOYS GIMME THAT BEST-WE-GOT HORSESHIT, NEITHER; ALL I AM IS THE FELLA WON'T SAY SQUAT ABOUT YOU IF HE EVER GETS FUCKIN' CAUGHT.
YOU GOT A LOOSE END FROM THAT BARBAROSSA CLUSTERFUCK--YOU CAN'T MEAN FURY, EVEN YOU ASSHOLES AIN'T DUMB ENOUGH TO TAKE A SHOT AT HIM. SO WHO DOES THAT LEAVE, EXACTLY? WHO ELSE KNOWS ALL THE DEEP, DARK SHIT THAT COULD GET YOU SENT TO LEAVENWORTH?
GEE FUCKIN' WHIZZ.
LEMME SEE IF I CAN GUESS.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

EARLY THIS MORNING, HORACE "SPOONIE" MOORE GOT A CALL FROM A BUSINESS ASSOCIATE, BIG JOE MCCLUSKEY--IN WHICH JOE TOLD HIM TO GO AND FUCK HIMSELF.
DROP THE MUTHAFUCKA!
THAT'S HORACE THERE, THE ONE GIVING ORDERS.
WHICH MAKES HIM QUICK.
WHICH MAKES HIM DEAD.
WHAT HORACE DIDN'T KNOW WAS THAT JOE HAD MY SHOTGUN IN HIS EAR, MEANING HE'D SAY WHATEVER HE WAS TOLD.
BUT HORACE CAME RUNNING, ALL THE SAME.

LITTLE BIRD TOLD ME HE AND JOE WERE RUNNING DOPE TOGETHER-- A LOT OF IT, ENOUGH THAT *FUCK YOURSELF* WOULD GIVE THE KID A HEART ATTACK. HE CAME STRAIGHT DOWN HERE, TO THE NUMBER ONE BIKER SHITHOLE IN QUEENS.
HE DIDN'T THINK ABOUT WHAT MIGHT BE WAITING.
HOMEBOYS AND NAZIS.
COKE BUSINESS MAKES STRANGE BEDFELLOWS.
DID A LOT OF DAMAGE LAST YEAR.
THE MOB, AT OLD MAN CESARE'S BIRTHDAY PARTY. THEN THE WESTIES, THEN LEON RASTOVICH'S RUSSIANS.
NOW AND AGAIN, SOME FUCK POPS UP AND TRIES TO FILL THE VACUUM.
AAAAAHH!
AND I REMIND THEM WHY IT PAYS TO BE AFRAID.

FUCK THIS SHIT, YO! HIT HIM TOGETHER!
GO!!
THAT'S THE BRAINWAVE I HOPED THEY WOULDN'T HAVE.
NO TIME TO RELOAD THE TWELVE-GAUGE NOW.
HERE'S WHERE IT GETS A LITTLE TRICKY.
UNNHH!

AAAAH--!
THEY PUT THE SIGHTS ON THE TOP FOR A REASON.

IT'S BEEN A YEAR.
SO HOW YOU BOYS BEEN DOIN'?
JUST SAY YOUR FUCKIN' PIECE, CAVELLA.
OKAY, I'LL TELL YOU HOW YOU'RE DOIN': YOU'RE PATHETIC.
HOW OLD ARE YOU, TONY? TWELVE? AN' THE RESTA YOU, YOU THINK YOU'D EVER A' MADE CAPO IF THERE WAS ANYONE ELSE LEFT FUCKIN' ALIVE?
UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES, YOU'D NONE A' YOU BE MORE THAN SOLDIERS--JESUS, I WOULDN'T TRUST YOU TO FETCH ME A SLICE A' PIZZA. AN' YOU SIT THERE IN THESE NICE SUITS YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO WEAR AN' YOU TELL ME YOU'RE WHAT'S RUNNIN' NEW YORK?
FUCK THAT.

FUCK THAT? FUCK YOU--
OKAY THEN, YOU TELL ME. HOW *ARE* YOU DOIN'?
ARE YOU EARNIN' LIKE YOU USED TO? DO THE SCHNOOKS WHO OWE YOU PAY UP, OR DO THEY DISRESPECT YOU? ARE YOU STILL STRONG, OR ARE YOU LOSIN' GROUND TO THE IVANS AN' THE JIGS?
DO YOU EVEN HAVE THE RESPECT OF YOUR *OWN CREWS?* OR DID YOU HAVE TO FILL 'EM OUT WITH PRICKS SHOULD NEVERA GOT THEIR BUTTONS INNA FIRST PLACE?
ONE YEAR AGO, THE PUNISHER TOOK OUT OVER FORTY OF OUR PEOPLE. CRIPPLED EVERYTHING WE GOT ONNA EAST COAST IN A SINGLE NIGHT'S WORK.
THE WAY *YOU* BEEN GOIN', HE MAY AS WELL A' ICED YOU TOO...
FROM WHAT I HEARD, YOU FED LARRY BARRUCCI'S CREW TO THE MOTHERFUCKER. YOU AN' THAT PSYCHO FUCK *PITTSY.*
FUCKIN' MUTT--!
EASY, KIDDO.
I'D LIKE YOU BOYS TO MEET TERESA.

SHE'S PITTSY'S LITTLE SISTER.
YOU SAY THAT SHIT ABOUT MY BROTHER AGAIN AN' I'LL *GLUE YA FUCKIN' DICK SHUT.*
SO HERE IT IS.
WE CAN REBUILD. WE CAN MAKE EVERYTHING JUST LIKE IT WAS-- BUT THERE AIN'T NO POINT WITH THE PUNISHER OUT THERE, 'CAUSE HE'LL JUST TEAR IT ALL APART AGAIN.
SO WE START WITH HIM. YOU LOAN ME YOUR SOLDIERS AN' I TAKE CARE A' HIM, AN' *THEN* WE CAN START AGAIN.
I'LL SHOW YOU HOW; I'LL TEACH YOU WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AN' THE SHIT YOU GOTTA DO TO PUT THIS THING A' OURS ON TOP AGAIN.
THE PRICE IS YOU MAKE ME BOSS.
WHAT?

NOT YOU, CAVELLA.
NEVER YOU.
NO OFFENSE, BUT YOU DO KINDA COME WITH A HEALTH WARNIN'...
HOW COME I CAN SEE YOU ABOUT A YEAR AGO, FEEDIN' EXACTLY THE SAME LINE A' SHIT TO POOR OL' LARRY BARRUCCI?
AN' LOOK WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM.
LOOK WHAT HAPPENS TO ANYONE GETS IN THE WAYA THAT MOTHERLESS FUCKIN' KILLIN' MACHINE...
EXCEPT FOR ME.
UH?
I GOT IN HIS WAY, AN' I'M STILL HERE. LOTTA PEOPLE MIGHT SAY THAT PUTS ME AHEADA THE GAME.
BUT IT AIN'T LIKE I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOUR DOUBTS. I KNOW I GOT A REPUTATION-- I'M SURE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE SHIT GOT ME SENT UP TO BOSTON, JUST FOR STARTERS.
ALL I'M GONNA SAY IS THIS: GO HOME. THINK ABOUT WHAT I TOLD YOU.
AN' WATCH THE SIX O'CLOCK NEWS TONIGHT, ANY CHANNEL YOU LIKE.
THEN THINK ABOUT GIVIN' ME A CALL.

NOT AGAIN.
DO YOU THREE GET OFF ON THIS, OR SOMETHING? DO YOU GO BACK TO YOUR CELL AND DO EACH OTHER WHILE YOU THINK ABOUT HOW I KICKED YOUR ASSES?
SUNSET AND SAWDUST
Joe R. Lansdale
ARRRHHH!
HA!!

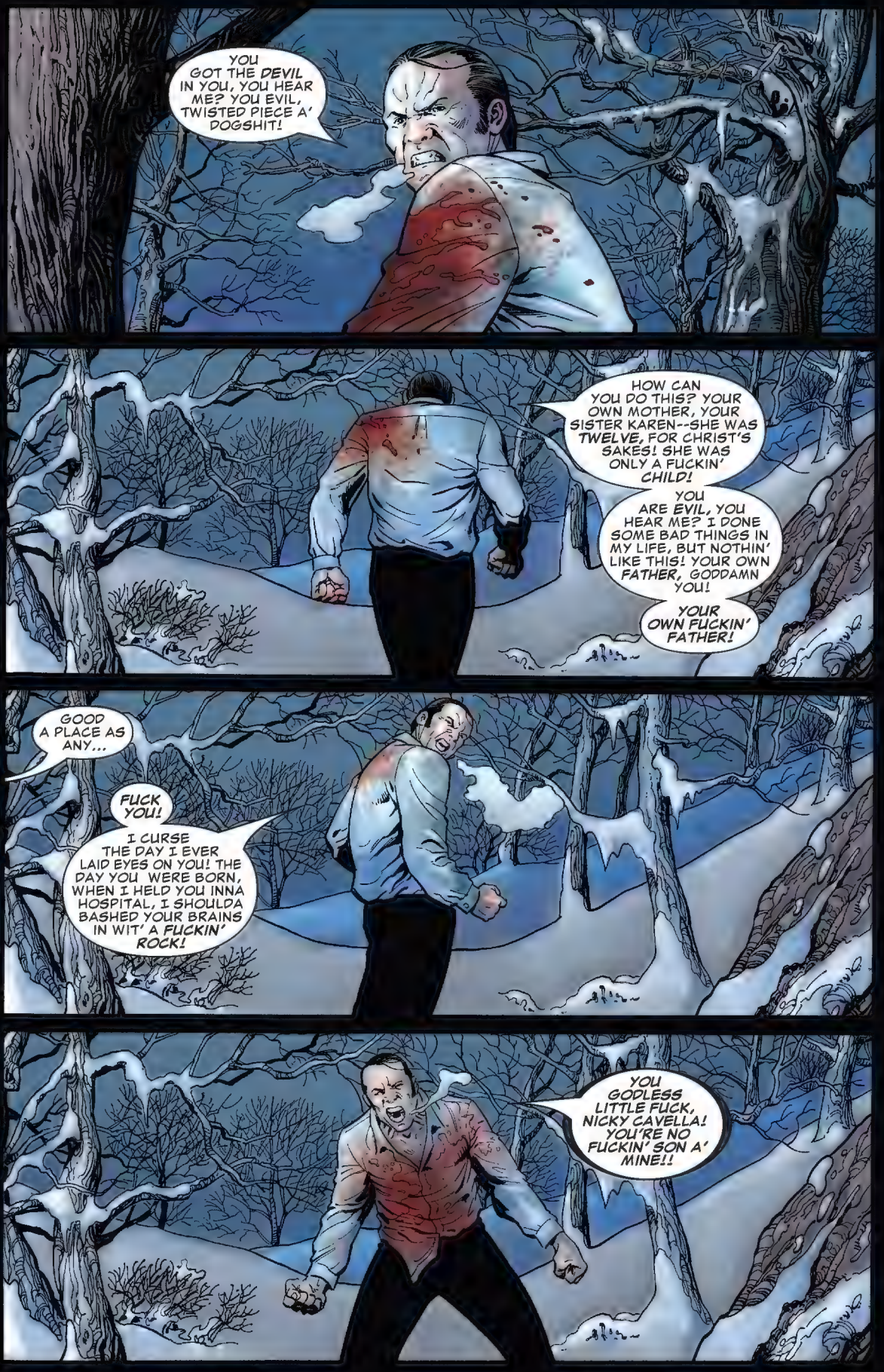
HAHAHAHA!
NOT FROM ME...
INMATE
14
OH, FUCK.

...BREAKING NEWS TONIGHT, OUR TOP STORY: A VIDEOTAPE SENT TO THIS NETWORK AND OTHERS DEPICTS SHOCKING SCENES AT THE GRAVE OF THE FAMILY OF FRANK CASTLE, ALSO KNOWN AS THE PUNISHER...
CASTLE, WHOSE WIFE MARIA AND TWO CHILDREN LISA AND FRANK JUNIOR WERE KILLED IN THE CROSSFIRE OF A MOB SHOOT-OUT IN NINETEEN SEVENTY-SIX, HAS WAGED A ONE-MAN WAR ON CRIME FOR ALMOST THIRTY YEARS.
IN THAT TIME, LAW ENFORCEMENT SOURCES ESTIMATE THAT HE MAY HAVE COMMITTED AS MANY AS TWO THOUSAND MURDERS. CASTLE IS CURRENTLY AT LARGE, AND IS BELIEVED TO BE CONTINUING HIS ACTIVITIES SOMEWHERE IN THE NEW YORK AREA.
VIEWERS ARE WARNED THAT THEY MAY FIND THE FOLLOWING IMAGES DISTURBING.
WHAT...?
SHH!
MARIA ELIZABETH CASTLE 1948 - 1976
LISA CASTLE 1967 - 1976
FRANK DAVID CASTLE 1971 - 1976
71 - 1976
JESUS CHRIST...

71-1976
UH?
MARIA ELIZABETH CASTLE 1948-1976
LISA CASTLE 1967-1976
FRANK DAVID CASTLE 1971-1976
HOLY SHIT--!
AN N.Y.P.D. SPOKESMAN HAS CONFIRMED THAT THE CASTLE FAMILY GRAVE IN GREENWOOD CEMETERY, BROOKLYN, WAS DISTURBED DURING THE NIGHT.
THE FIGURE IN THE VIDEOTAPE IS BELIEVED TO BE NICOLAS CAVELLA, A LONGTIME MAFIA FIGURE WHO IS WANTED BY LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL AUTHORITIES.
THAT...
THAT GUY IS GONNA GO FUCKIN' BERSERK...
TELL ME ABOUT IT.

LEANDRO
FERNÁNDEZ '04
DB
S. Hanna

PUNISHER #20


YOU GOT THE DEVIL IN YOU, YOU HEAR ME? YOU EVIL, TWISTED PIECE A' DOGSHIT!
HOW CAN YOU DO THIS? YOUR OWN MOTHER, YOUR SISTER KAREN--SHE WAS TWELVE, FOR CHRIST'S SAKES! SHE WAS ONLY A FUCKIN' CHILD!
YOU ARE EVIL, YOU HEAR ME? I DONE SOME BAD THINGS IN MY LIFE, BUT NOTHIN' LIKE THIS! YOUR OWN FATHER, GODDAMN YOU!
YOUR OWN FUCKIN' FATHER!
GOOD A PLACE AS ANY...
FUCK YOU!
I CURSE THE DAY I EVER LAID EYES ON YOU! THE DAY YOU WERE BORN, WHEN I HELD YOU INNA HOSPITAL, I SHOULDA BASHED YOUR BRAINS IN WIT' A FUCKIN' ROCK!
YOU GODLESS LITTLE FUCK, NICKY CAVELLA! YOU'RE NO FUCKIN' SON A' MINE!!

Up is Down and Black is White

Part Two

MISTER CAVELLA?
MM...?
YOU WAS, YOU WAS SMILIN', I DUNNO...
MILES AWAY, KIDDO.
I KEEP TELLIN' YOU, YOU CAN CALL ME NICKY, IF YOU WANT.
YOU... YOU CAN CALL ME TESSIE...
WHAT'S GOIN' ON WITH OUR FRIENDS?
AH, THEY'RE STILL YAKKIN', THE FUCKIN' MUTTS.
THAT LITTLE PRICK TONY PIZZO, HE'S TURNED INTO YA NUMBER ONE FAN. KEEPS SAYIN' DIDN'T YA SEE ONNA NEWS, DIDN'T YA SEE ONNA NEWS, OVER AN' OVER AGAIN...
JOEY PICARDI, HE LIKES BREAKIN' TONY'S BALLS. KEEPS CALLIN' HIM TONY PISS-BOY.
I GOTTA REMEMBER THAT ONE.

TONY WANTS TO GO WIT' YA, JOEY DEFINITELY DON'T. OTHER THREE AIN'T MADE THEIR MINDS UP.
FAT MIKE'S STARTIN' TO SOUND PRETTY GOOD. SAYS YOU GOTTA BE THE FIRST GUY IN HISTORY ACTUALLY LANDED ONE ONNA PUNISHER.
WHAT'S JOEY'S PROBLEM, EXACTLY?
FUCKIN' FAGGOT SAYS YER SOME KINDA PSYCHO. KEEPS BRINGIN' UP ALL THAT SHIT FROM WAY BACK.
THAT'S TOO BAD.
WANT ME TO WHACK THE STOOPID SHIT?
NOT YET.
IF YOU DO DO IT, MAKE IT QUIET. I WANT THESE MOOKS THINKIN' THEY MADE THE DECISION THEMSELVES, OKAY?
ASSHOLE'S SITTIN' IN THERE TALKIN' LIKE A CUNT...
HE'LL COME AROUND. YOU GOTTA UNDERSTAND HOW DESPERATE THESE PEOPLE ARE, KIDDO.
I MEAN HERE THEY ARE, FIVE CAPOS AT A MAJOR MEET, AN' EVERY ONE A' THEM CAME ALONE, THIS ROOM OUGHTA BE FULLA GUNS--BUT THESE PRICKS DON'T EVEN TRUST THEIR OWN CREWS TO WATCH THEIR FUCKIN' BACKS FOR THEM.
THEY'RE OUTTA THEIR DEPTH. I'M THROWIN' THEM A LIFELINE. ONLY A MATTER A' TIME BEFORE WHAT'S GOTTA HAPPEN HAPPENS.
SHIT, THEY KNOW THAT AS WELL AS I DO...

MOM... DAD...
NICKY, IT--IT'S GONNA BE OKAY--
NNOOOO...!
WHAT THE FUCK YOU TELLIN' HIM IT'S GONNA BE OKAY FOR? HIS WHOLE ENTIRE FAMILY JUST GOT--
SHUT THE FUCK UP!
GO WAIT FOR THE OTHERS! GO!
NICKY, LISTEN TO ME: YOU DID THE RIGHT THING CALLIN' US, OKAY? YOU DIDN'T CALL THE COPS OR NOTHIN', RIGHT?
R...RIGHT...
DID-- NICKY, DID YOU SEE WHO IT WAS DONE THIS...?
IT WAS UNCLE JIMMY...
NICKY!

AUNTIE MO--!
NICKY, MY POOR LITTLE SOLDIER! OH MY GOD, WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO YOU! WHAT HAVE THE MONSTERS DONE!
THERE, LITTLE MAN! THERE, YOU HOLD ON TIGHT TO AUNTIE MO!
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED HERE...?
UM...MO... JOHNNY'S DEAD. HE'S OUT BACK INNA WOODS, THE KID SAYS THEY WALKED HIM OUT THERE.
JOANIE AN' THE LITTLE GIRL, THEY'RE INNA OTHER ROOM...
NICKY HID UNDER HIS BED, BUT...
MO, HE SAID HE SAW 'EM. HE SAID IT WAS YOUR BROTHER JIMMY.
THAT FUCK.
HE WALKED JOHNNY INNA THE WOODS--THAT'S JIMMY'S M.O., RIGHT? ALWAYS FUCKS WITH 'EM A LITTLE FIRST, LIKES TO SEE IF THEY'LL START BEGGIN'?
...YEAH...
THEN GO DO WHAT HAS TO BE DONE.
MO, WE OUGHTA AT LEAST TALK TO JIMMY FIRST, I MEAN MAYBE THE KID MADE A MISTAKE...
IF JOHNNY CAVELLA IS DEAD, WHO DOES THAT MEAN'S RUNNIN' THIS FAMILY?
UH--
SO WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU THINK YOU OUGHTA DO...?

THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT'S RIGHT.
THERE'S MY LITTLE SOLDIER.
THERE'S MY GOOD LITTLE BOY.
YOU DID GREAT, NICKY. YOU DID EVERYTHING JUST LIKE AUNTIE MO SAID, RIGHT?
YES, AUNTIE MO.
I KNEW YOU COULD DO IT.
I ALWAYS KNEW YOU WERE SUCH A SMART, BRAVE LITTLE BOY, NICKY. I ALWAYS FELT LIKE YOU WERE *MINE.*
ALL THOSE THINGS WE TALKED ABOUT ARE GONNA COME TRUE NOW, YOU KNOW THAT? ALL THE STUFF THAT OTHER PEOPLE GOT THAT SHOULDA BEEN AUNTIE MO'S, IT'S ALL GONNA BE HERS NOW. AN' SHE'S NOT GONNA FORGET HER LITTLE SOLDIER, DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT THAT.
NOW WE'RE *BOTH* GONNA GET WHAT WE DESERVE, NICKY...
SURE, AUNTIE MO.
YOU BETCHA.

YOU DON'T LIKE THAT HE'S HERE.
IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYIN'?
IT...IT IS A LITTLE WEIRD, MO.
HE'S A *KID*, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE.
JOHNNY CAVELLA IS IN THE GROUND. SO IS HIS RATFUCK BROTHER-- A CURSE ON THE BASTARD'S FUCKIN' SOUL.
THIS IS HIS *ONLY SON*. ONE DAY HE'S GONNA BE RUNNIN' THIS FAMILY.
YOU WANNA TELL ME HOW THE *FUCK ELSE* HE'S GONNA LEARN HOW IT'S DONE?
MO, HE'S *EIGHT*...
MAYBE WE SHOULD START 'EM ALL THIS YOUNG, WOULDN'T END UP WITH A BUNCHA FUCKIN' PUSSIES LIKE YOU BOYS.
OKAY, WHERE THE FUCK WERE WE?

FUCK AUNTIE MO--
FUCK AUNTIE MO--
FUCK AUNTIE MO--
FUCK AUNTIE MO--
I TOLD YA, BABY--TOLD YA I'D GIVE YA SOMETHIN' SPECIAL--
YOU'RE A MAN NOW, NICKY--YOU'RE MY BIG MAN, MY BIG BRAVE FUCKIN' SOLDIERRR...!
YOU'RE GONNA BE THE BEST THERE EVER WAS, NICKY--I'M GONNA OOHHHHH
I'M GONNA MAKE YA WHAT YOUR FATHER NEVER WAS--WHAT HE NEVER HAD THE BALLS TO BE--
FUCK AUNTIE MO--
FUCK AUNTIE MO--
FUCK AUNTIE MO--

HERE'S YOUR SOMETHIN' SPECIAL, NICKY.
THIS IS RONNIE GAVIGAN. BOYS DROPPED HIM OFF THIS MORNIN'.
RONNIE OWNS THEM THREE BARS IN FLATBUSH, THE ONES ALL GOT THE BIG SHAMROCK SIGN ONNA FRONT. HE'S INTO US FOR TWENTY-FIVE LARGE ON EACH PLACE.
BEEN TELLIN' EVERYONE WHO'LL LISTEN THE DEBT'S AS GOOD AS CANCELLED.
SAYS THE CAVELLAS AIN'T GOT THE STONES TO COME COLLECT.
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, NICKY.
K... K...
KID?

TONY AN' FAT MIKE ARE COOL. PICARDI WON'T BUDGE.
OTHER TWO COULD STILL GO EITHER WAY.
I FUCKIN' HELP YOU WIT' SOMETHIN'?
EAT MY FUCKIN' SNATCH, PICARDI!
JUST IN CASE YOU MISSED ANYTHIN', CAVELLA: YOU'RE FUCKED. THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL I'M GOIN' ALONG WIT' YOU BEIN' BOSS--AN' SO LONG AS I DON'T, PETE AN' MAX AIN'T GONNA GO FOR IT NEITHER.
BACK IN A MINUTE. JUST GONNA GO TAKE A PISS ALL OVER YOUR FUTURE.
PRIVATE
THAT'S A SHAME.

UHH! UHH! UHH! UHH! UHH!
UHH!
COCKSUCKER.

WHAT I MISS?
"HEY-- WHERE THE FUCK'S JOEY?"
I'M GONNA GO TAKE THE AIR, KIDDO. LEMME KNOW WHEN THEY MAKE THEIR MINDS UP, OKAY?

FUCK AUNTIE MO--
FUCK AUNTIE MO--
FUCK AUNTIE MO LIKE THE MAN YOU ARE, OH, YEEESSSS...!
YOU'RE A MADE MAN, NICKY! JUST LIKE I TOLD YOU! THEY MADE YOU, THEY MADE MY BIG SOLDIER A SOLDIER TODAY!
AN' SOON YOU'LL MAKE CAPTAIN! YOU GOT PITTSY AN' INK NOW, YOU'LL BE RUNNIN' YOUR OWN CREW IN NO TIME! AN' ONE DAY YOU'RE GONNA BE OH, OH, OHHH--
UNNH!
NNNHHH--
FEEL THAT, AUNTIE MO?
FEEL THAT?
FEEL THAT?
FEEL THAT?

SO THERE IT IS. CHINAMAN WON'T BACK DOWN-- BOSS WANTS SOMETHIN' DONE ABOUT IT. SAYS HE AIN'T ABOUT TO LOSE OUR PIECE A' MOTT STREET. NO FUCKIN' WAY.
THIS IS MINE.
THAT OKAY WIT' THE RESTA YA?
I GOT NO PROBLEM.
ALL YOURS, KID.
I'LL GET INK AN' PITTSY ON IT RIGHT AWAY.
PITTSY GAZZERA? USED TO WORK FOR RAY THE RAT?
JACKIE, I KNOW HE'S GOT A REP, I KNOW HE MAKES PEOPLE NERVOUS. DON'T WORRY.
HE'S GONNA MAKE DAVID KAI NERVOUS, THAT'S ALL THAT FUCKIN' COUNTS...
NICKY, REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YA: BOSS DON'T WANT KAI GETTIN' ANYTHIN' MORE'N A WARNING. WE GO IN HEAVY IN CHINATOWN AN' THERE'S NO PROFIT FOR ANYONE, CAPISCE?
WELL, THAT'S CESARE FOR YA. LITTLE BIT MORE SENTIMENTAL EVERY DAY.
HE IS YOUR GODFATHER AN' HE SPEAKS TO YOU THROUGH ME.
DON'T, WHACK. KAI.

FUCK YOUR ITALIAN ASSES 'TIL THEY BLEED SPAGHETTI SAUCE.
MOTT STREET BELONGS TO ME.
SOUNDS LIKE WE GOT A BASIS FOR NEGOTIATION.
THIS IS A JOKE TO YOU, ERRAND-BOY?
I GOT AN ARMY BACKING ME UP--WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU GOT?
YOU THINK A CREW OF WOPS SCARE ME, JUST 'CAUSE YOU ACT LIKE MARLON FUCKING BRANDO? YOU WATCH A COUPLE OF MOVIES AND YOU THINK YOU CAN TALK ABOUT FAMILY?
I HAVE FAMILY. I HAVE THREE STRONG SONS: IN THEIR VEINS IS THE BLOODLINE OF A THOUSAND YEARS. TO US, YOU PEOPLE LOOK LIKE FARMERS.
GO BACK TO JERSEY, OR WHATEVER PIGSTY YOU WOKE UP IN THIS MORNING. TELL CESARE TO KEEP HIS WITHERED OLD PRICK THE FUCK OUT OF MY AFFAIRS.
GO NOW.
TWO STRONG SONS.
WHAT?

WONG NEVER MADE IT HOME FROM JUNIOR HIGH.
DON'T YOU--
YOU THOUGHT I CAME ALONE JUST TO SHOW YOU WHAT BIG BALLS I GOT? I AIN'T ALONE.
MY BOYS GOT HERE THREE HOURS AGO.
YOU DIDN'T CHECK OUT YOUR OWN PLACE, YOU STUPID, OVERCONFIDENT MOTHERFUCKER.
THEY BEEN HIDIN' IN THE BACKA YOUR KITCHEN ALL THIS TIME. YOUR ASSHOLES'VE BEEN HANGIN' INNA MEAT LOCKER. AN' YOUNG WONG--
HE'S BEEN BUBBLIN' AWAY IN THAT BIG POT ON TOPPA THE STOVE.
MOTHERFUCKER--

ONE STRONG SON.
NO STRONG SONS.
WE DONE WIT' THIS FUCK YET?
ALMOST.
HEY, MISTER KAI-- MY FRIEND INK HERE? HE COOKS A LITTLE BIT.
HUH.
HE SAYS HE CAN DO THAT RINKY-DINK, SWEET AN' SOUR SHIT YOU BOYS ARE SO FOND OF IN HIS SLEEP.
SEE YOU.

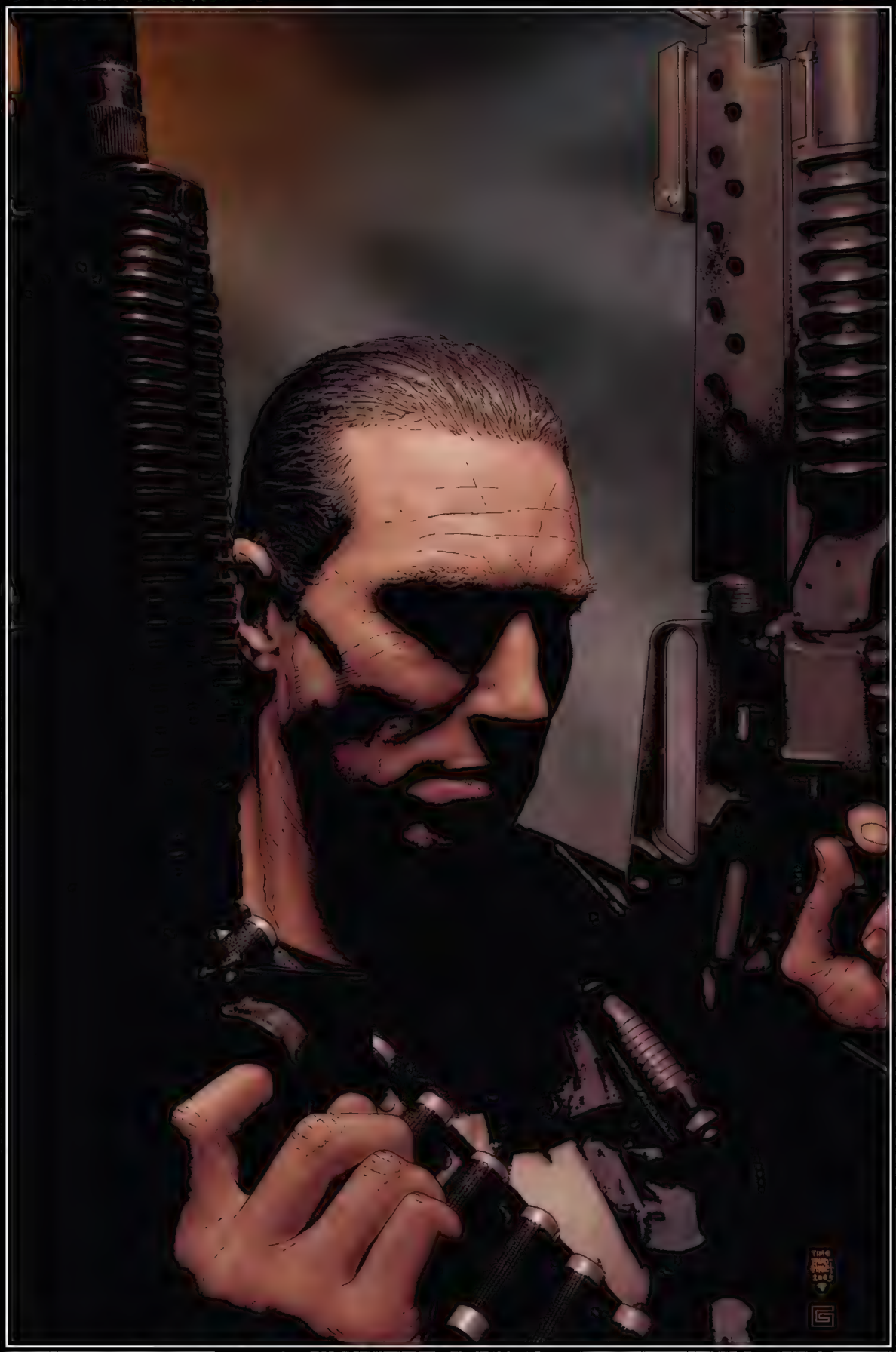
I DON'T GET IT.
YOU SAID DON'T WHACK HIM. WE DIDN'T WHACK HIM.
NO, I HEARD WHAT YOU FUCKIN' DID.
WE'RE GONNA HAVE A WAR NOW, NICKY.
C'MON, JACKIE, WE WERE GONNA HAVE A WAR ANYWAY. YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO WHAT A HARDASS KAI IS.
THE ONLY WAY TO DEAL WITH FUCKS LIKE HIM IS TO SHOW *STRENGTH*--OR ELSE THE COCKSUCKER'S GONNA GO ON TRYNNA TAKE WHAT'S YOURS...
NICKY, I'M TELLIN' YA WHAT CESARE TOLD ME THIS MORNIN': YA GOTTA LEAVE TOWN.
'CAUSE IF YA DON'T, HE AIN'T GONNA GUARANTEE YOUR CONTINUED GOOD HEALTH.
THIS IS A MISTAKE. THIS IS A *FUCKIN' MISTAKE...*
LOOK, TAKE YOUR BOYS AN' GO TO BOSTON FOR A WHILE. I CALLED MY COUSIN ANGELO ABOUT YA, I TOLD HIM YOU'RE A STAND-UP GUY.
AN' LISTEN TO ME: MASSIMO CESARE IS *EIGHTY-FIVE YEARS OLD*. HE DRINKS A BOTTLE A' SCOTCH A DAY. HE'S GOT HOOKERS FUCKIN' HIM TO SLEEP EVERY NIGHT. HE'S *GONNA DIE.*
GO NORTH-- AN' IT AIN'T GONNA BE LONG BEFORE YOU'RE COMIN' HOME AGAIN, YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M SAYIN'?
YEAH, SURE.

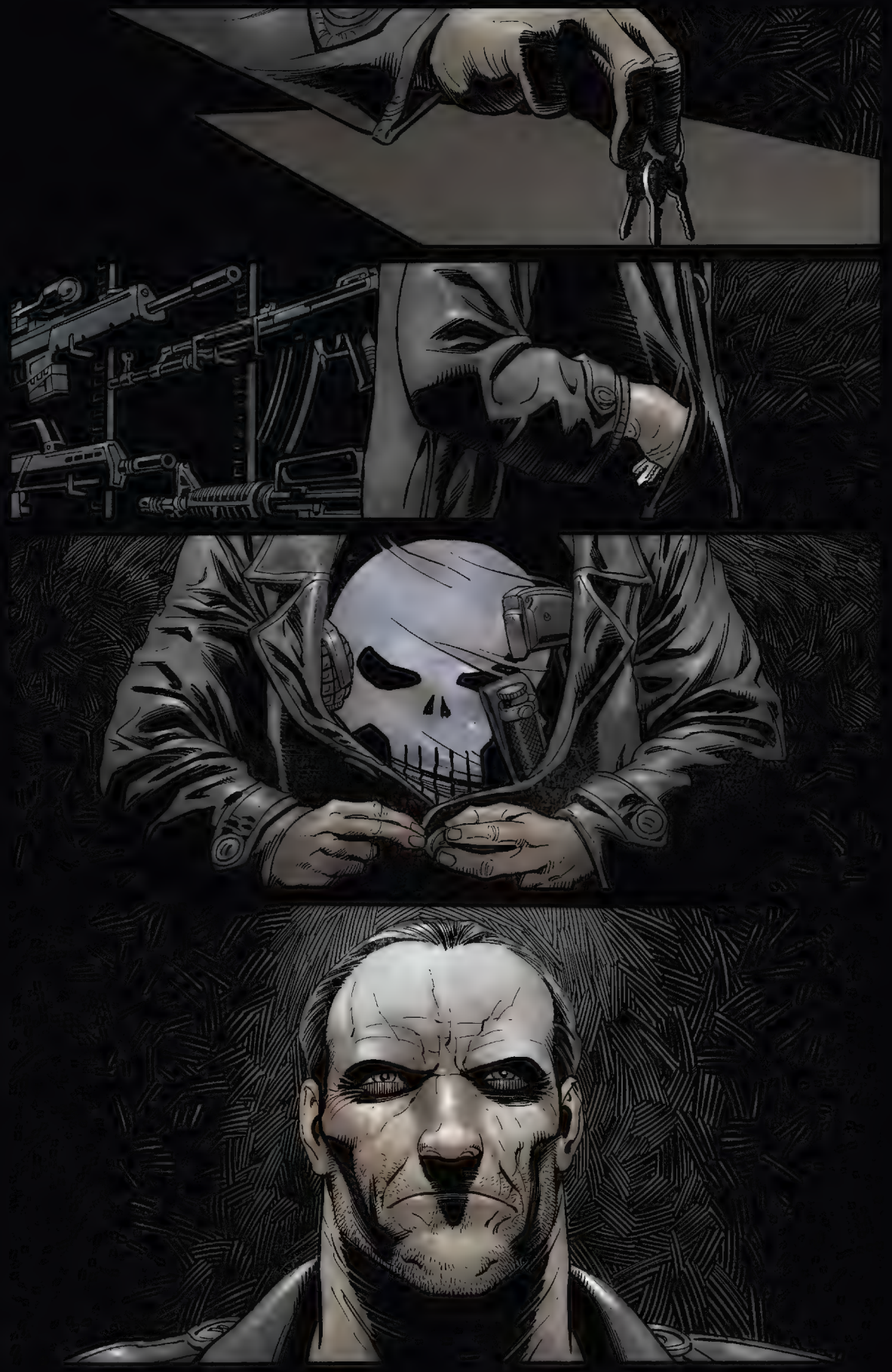
THEY DECIDED.
THEY SAY THEY WANT YOU IN AS BOSS.
I KNOW.
THEY WANNA KNOW IF THEY CAN TALK TO YOU OR NOT...
NOT NOW.
MISTER CAVELLA SAYS HE'LL TALK TO YA INNA MORNIN'. YA GOTTA GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE NOW.
BUT--
COME ON, DON'T BE A FUCKIN' ASSHOLE. GET MOVIN'.
FUCK YOU, DAD.

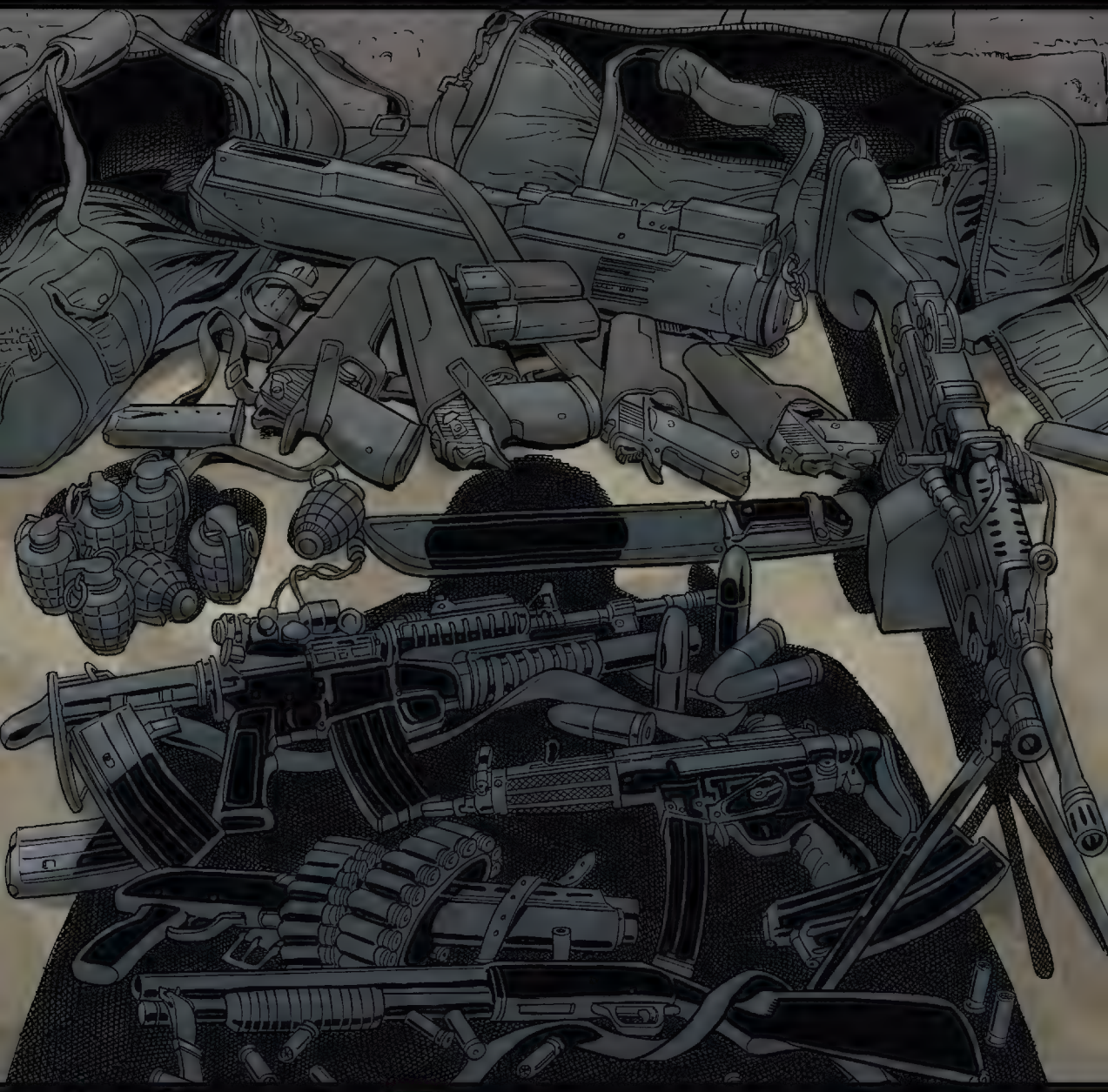
AN' FUCK YOU, MOM.
FUCK YOU, KAREN, YOU POINTLESS BITCH. FUCK YOU, UNCLE JIMMY. FUCK YOU, AUNTIE MO, YOU BIG FAT FUCKIN' CUNT.
FUCK YOU, KAI, AN' ALL YOUR DEAD BRATS ALONGSIDE YOU. FUCK YOU, JACKIE. FUCK YOU, DON MASSIMO CESARE, YOU PUSSY--THE PUNISHER DID US ALL A FAVOR WHEN HE BLEW YOUR FUCKIN' OLD HEAD OFF.
FUCK YOU, INK, AN' FUCK YOU, PITTSY. A LOTTA USE YOU TWO PRICKS TURNED OUT TO BE.
FUCK YOU, CASTLE.
I AIN'T FINISHED WITH YOU YET, NOT BY A LONG WAY.
YOU SAY SOMETHIN'?
NOT ME, KIDDO.
WAIT FOR ME INNA CAR, OKAY? I'LL BE OUT IN A MINUTE OR TWO.

AND WHEN I GET TO HEAVEN, I'LL TELL THEM FUCK YOU TOO.
LEANDRO FERNANDEZ '04
S. Hanna

PUNISHER #21







Up is Down and Black is White

Part Three

ROTH! ROTH, IT'S ME!
OPEN THE FUCK UP, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE...!
O'BRIEN--?
ABOUT TIME...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I--
WHAT ARE YOU *WEARING*?
LOOK--
OH MY GOD, YOU BROKE OUT OF PRISON, DIDN'T YOU?
ROTH, WILL YOU PLEASE JUST CLOSE THE DOOR?
THIS FUCKING BULL DYKE TRIED TO FRAME ME FOR KILLING ONE OF THE GUARDS. I WASN'T HANGING AROUND TO EXPLAIN; I JUMPED THE LAUNDRY TRUCK THE NIGHT BEFORE LAST.
GOT ANYTHING TO DRINK AROUND HERE?

WHOOPEE...
THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO CHANCE OF YOU STICKING AROUND AND STRAIGHTENING EVERYTHING OUT?
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING. AFTER THE WHOLE BETHELL DISASTER I WAS LUCKY TO EVEN *GET* JAIL--HALF THE PENTAGON'S STILL LOOKING FOR AN EXCUSE TO CLOSE THE FILE ON ME FOR GOOD.
THAT SHIT UP NORTH A FEW YEARS BACK, NO ONE'S GOING TO FORGET THAT ANY TIME SOON...
WHAT ABOUT YOU, ANYWAY? HOW'D YOU END UP BACK IN JERSEY CITY?
OH, BY THE TIME I GOT OUT OF THE HOSPITAL, EVERYONE WANTED THE WHOLE PUNISHER OPERATION TO JUST GO AWAY AND DIE QUIETLY. THEY PENSIONED ME OFF-- I CAME HOME.
COME TO THINK OF IT, HOW'D YOU *FIND ME...?*
THAT LITTLE THANK-YOU NOTE YOU SENT ME FOR SAVING YOUR LIFE. YOU PUT YOUR ADDRESS AT THE TOP OF IT.
OH, CHRIST.
YOU MEAN THE LETTER I SENT ASKING IF YOU STILL HAD MY BALLS, DON'T YOU?
I...I WENT A BIT *FUNNY* FOR A WHILE...I WAS SENDING THOSE LETTERS TO EVERYONE, I EVEN TOOK OUT ADS IN THE PAPERS...
I GAVE THE CUP WITH THE BALLS IN IT TO THE NURSE AT THE E.R.. FIGURED THEY COULD SEW THEM BACK ON, OR SOMETHING.

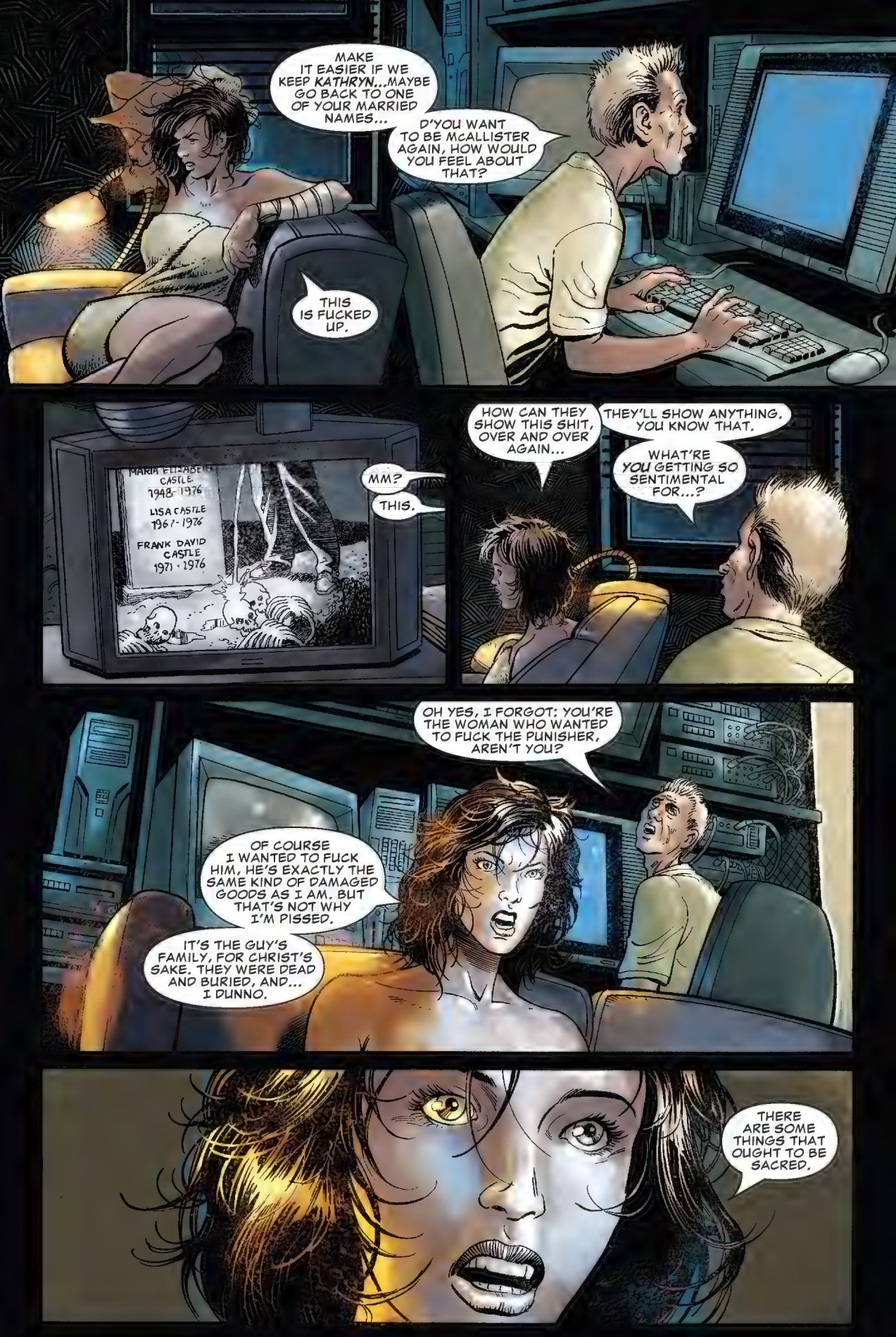
YOU CAN'T SEW BALLS BACK ON, O'BRIEN--!
HOW WOULD I KNOW? THE ONLY THING I KNOW ABOUT BALLS IS HOW TO BUST THEM.
COME ON, QUIT MOPING.
I'M GOING TO NEED CLOTHES, FOR STARTERS. AFTER THAT YOU CAN GET YOUR CYBERGEEK HEAD ON AND WORK ME UP A NEW I.D.-- PASSPORTS, SOCIAL SECURITY, THE WHOLE THING TOP TO BOTTOM.
AND DO IT QUICKLY, BECAUSE IF I'M NOT ON MY WAY TO OUTER MONGOLIA OR SOMEWHERE FAST, SOME COMPANY FUCK IS GOING TO SNEAK UP AND--
HEY.
DEFILED
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?

...TELLING YOU, I KNOW PEOPLE...
FUCK OFF.
I GOT THESE GIRLS WITH ME, MAN...
FUCK OFF.
VOLGA
WHAT'S YOUR FUCKING STORY?
KAGANOVITCH.
P-P-PRIVATE PARTY--BACK ROOM--
JESUS!!

BURN MOTHERFUCKER BURN MOTHERFUCKER BURN MOTHE
MOTHERFUCKER BURN MOTHERFUCKER BURN MOTHE

WAAAAHH!
PRIVATE
GO.

PRIVAT
WHAT... UH...
NO!!


MAKE IT EASIER IF WE KEEP KATHRYN...MAYBE GO BACK TO ONE OF YOUR MARRIED NAMES...
D'YOU WANT TO BE McALLISTER AGAIN, HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT?
THIS IS FUCKED UP.
MARIA ELIZABETH CASTLE 1948-1976
LISA CASTLE 1967-1976
FRANK DAVID CASTLE 1971-1976
MM?
THIS.
HOW CAN THEY SHOW THIS SHIT, OVER AND OVER AGAIN...
THEY'LL SHOW ANYTHING. YOU KNOW THAT.
WHAT'RE YOU GETTING SO SENTIMENTAL FOR...?
OH YES, I FORGOT: YOU'RE THE WOMAN WHO WANTED TO FUCK THE PUNISHER, AREN'T YOU?
OF COURSE I WANTED TO FUCK HIM, HE'S EXACTLY THE SAME KIND OF DAMAGED GOODS AS I AM. BUT THAT'S NOT WHY I'M PISSED.
IT'S THE GUY'S FAMILY, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE. THEY WERE DEAD AND BURIED, AND... I DUNNO.
THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT OUGHT TO BE SACRED.

YOUR HEART OF GOLD IS SHOWING...
YEAH, WELL I SAVED YOUR FUCKING ASS, DIDN'T I?
HOW'S IT COMING OVER THERE?
SLOW BUT SURE. I'M TRAWLING THE COMPANY DATABASE, JUST TO SEE IF YOU'RE--
OH, HERE'S SOMETHING INTERESTING. YOUR EX-HUBBY'S IN TOWN.
WHICH ONE?
RAWLINS. I'VE GOT A CROSS-REF PROGRAM RUNNING; HE CAME UP WHEN I STUCK IN YOUR MARRIED NAMES.
CAN YOU FIND HIM?
YEAH, HE'S AT THE MANDARIN. JESUS, HE'S NOT TOO SHY WITH THE AGENCY AMEX...
CAN YOU GET ME A GUN?
EASY.
WAIT A MINUTE, WHAT?

PARAMEDIC
OH, SHIT.

OVER TO YOU, I GUESS.
WE'RE ALL THROUGH HERE.
HE DID 'EM ALL?
EVERY ONE, DETECTIVE.
LOT OF LEG WOUNDS WHERE HE PUT THEM DOWN. HE COULD AFFORD TO TAKE HIS TIME AFTER THAT.
YOU'VE GOT CENTER-CHEST AND CRANIAL STUFF, ALONG WITH DEFENSIVE WOUNDS IN THE HANDS. HE PROBABLY JUST WALKED AROUND BLASTING THEM ONE BY ONE.
I TAKE IT THIS *WAS* HIM...
WE GOT A POSITIVE I.D. FROM THE TWO GIRLS.
ONE OPTIMISTIC MOTHERFUCKER RIGHT HERE...
IT WAS A PARTY. THEY WOULDN'T HAVE BRUNG ANY REAL ARTILLERY.
SHIT, THIS WAS NO GUNFIGHT, IT WASN'T EVEN ONE OF HIS REGULAR SLAUGHTERS. HE *STUCK AROUND* TO BE *ABSOLUTELY SURE*--
SHUT UP!!
RIVATE

WHAT--
I SAID SHUT UP! SHUT IT!
I FUCKING HEARD SOMETHING...
UHH
HERE! COME ON! HERE!
GIMME A HAND, WE GOT A FUCKING LIVE ONE!
OH, JESUS--
YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
I KNOW WHAT I HEARD, GODDAMMIT! COME ON!
UH
UH
UH
FUCK--!

UH
UH
UH
YOU'RE OKAY, YOU'RE OKAY! WE GOT YOU!
LUCKY MOTHERFUCKER...!
NO
NO
HE LEFT ME
OKAY, YOU GOTTA MOVE BACK NOW, YOU GOTTA LET US WORK ON HIM--
FUCK THAT--
HE SAID
HE SAID
HE SAID YOU HAVE TO BURY HIS FAMILY
WE...OH, SHIT, WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO CALL THE COMMISSIONER...
THIS IS THE COMMISSIONER.
THE SON OF A BITCH JUST DID IT AGAIN.

REPORTS ARE NOW COMING IN OF THE NIGHT'S THIRD ATTACK BY FRANK CASTLE, THE VIGILANTE KNOWN AS THE PUNISHER, THIS TIME IN THE BEDFORD-STUYVESANT AREA OF BROOKLYN. ONE N.Y.P.D. SOURCE SAID UNOFFICIALLY THAT THE DEATH TOLL MAY BE AS HIGH AS THIRTY--WHICH WOULD BRING THE TOTAL FOR ALL THREE INCIDENTS TO SIXTY-EIGHT.

THE LATEST VICTIMS OF THE PUNISHER'S NIGHT OF CARNAGE ARE BELIEVED TO BE MEMBERS OF TWO BLACK YOUTH GANGS, WHOSE RECENT SO-CALLED TURF WAR HAS CLAIMED THE LIVES OF FOUR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND THREE GANG MEMBERS. LOCAL EXPERTS CLAIM THAT THE TWO GANGS HAD MET TONIGHT TO TALK PEACE--PROMPTING SPECULATION THAT CASTLE IS USING HIS DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF THE CRIMINAL UNDERWORLD TO CLAIM AS MANY VICTIMS AS HE CAN IN THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE TIME.

THE BED-STUY MASSACRE FOLLOWS CASTLE'S ASSAULT ON THE STRONGHOLD OF CONVICTED RACKETEER RONALD KAI IN MANHATTAN'S CHINATOWN, AND BEFORE THAT, THE FIRST INCIDENT, THE SLAUGHTER OF RUSSIAN MAFIA BOSS NIKOLAI KAGANOVITCH AND ASSOCIATES AT A NIGHTCLUB IN BRIGHTON BEACH. IN EACH INSTANCE, ONE SURVIVOR HAS BEEN LEFT TO CARRY THE PUNISHER'S GRIM DEMAND TO THE CITY OF NEW YORK: THAT HIS FAMILY'S REMAINS BE REBURIED, OR HIS STEPPED-UP CAMPAIGN OF SLAUGHTER WILL CONTINUE.

THE BODIES OF CASTLE'S FAMILY--SHOT DEAD BY MOBSTERS IN THE MID-SEVENTIES--WERE DISINTERRED TWO NIGHTS AGO BY MOB FIGURE NICOLAS CAVELLA, WHO FILMED HIS SUBSEQUENT DESECRATION OF THE REMAINS IN A CLEAR ATTEMPT TO PROVOKE THE VIGILANTE TO ACTION...

FAME AT LAST, HUH, NICKY?

CALL HIM MISTER CAVELLA, YA MUTT!

AFTER THE BRIGHTON BEACH INCIDENT, AN N.Y.P.D. SPOKESMAN STATED THAT THE CITY WOULD NOT GIVE IN TO VIOLENT INTIMIDATION, CLAIMING THAT THE CASTLE REMAINS ARE NOW EVIDENCE IN AN ONGOING INVESTIGATION. SINCE THE SECOND AND THIRD ATTACKS, HOWEVER, THE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN NOTICEABLY SILENT.

COME ON, KIDDO, PLAY NICE. TONY, YOU CAN CALL ME NICKY IF YOU WANT TO.

YOU KNOW, THIS IS REALLY KINDA INTERESTIN'. I THOUGHT THE PRICK WOULD JUST GO FUCKIN' CRAZY.

WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU CALL THIS...?
THIS AIN'T CRAZY.
I THOUGHT HE'D COME AT US STRAIGHT AWAY, BUT HE'S STILL A METHODICAL FUCK. HE WANTS THIS THING WITH HIS FAMILY SET RIGHT BEFORE HE DOES ANYTHIN' ELSE--OTHERWISE HE CAN'T GET HIS HEAD STRAIGHT FOR THE FIGHT.
INTERESTIN'.
I FIGURE WE'LL SEE HIM PRETTY SOON.
SHIT, YOU THINK SO?
YOUR MOM DATIN' ANYONE RIGHT NOW, TONY?
WH... WHAT?
'CAUSE LEMME TELL YOU, SHE IS STILL SOME PIECE OF ASS...
GUY HERE TO SEE YA, MISTER CAVELLA.

YEAH?
I WOULDN'T, UH, I WOULDN'TA BOTHERED YA, BUT IT SEEMS LIKE HE KNOWS YA PRETTY GOOD...
HE GOT A NAME?
RAWLINS!
RAWLINS IS HIS FUCKIN' NAME...!
BEEN A LONG TIME, NICKY. ALMOST AS LONG AS MY GODDAMN DICK.
YOU MISS ME?

'CHOO NEED, HOMES?
SPRINGFIELD ARMORY
FUCK--
OPEN IT.
I'M DOIN' IT, I'M FUCKIN' DOIN' IT!
DON'T--
THERE'S A DREAM I HAVE FROM TIME TO TIME.

FUGWUZAD...?
AND IN THE DREAM I DON'T STOP.
THE PRODUCT! GIT THE MUTHAFUCKIN' SHIT!
I KILL THE SOLDIERS AND THE HITMEN, THE EXTORTIONERS AND RACKETEERS, THE DARK OLD FUCKS WHO SEND THEM OUT TO FIGHT--
I HOLD THE TRIGGER DOWN UNTIL THEY'RE ALL GONE--
BUT I DON'T STOP.

THE INNOCENTS ARE WATCHING, JUST LIKE ALWAYS.
THE SLACK-JAWED THOUSANDS, GAZING AT THE BEAST.
AAAAAAH!
MY FAMILY LIE RED AND SHREDDED IN THE GRASS. I FACE THE CROWD AND BRING THE WEAPON TO MY SHOULDER.
IF MY WORLD ENDS, I TELL THEM, SO DOES YOURS.
THE RECOIL STARTS AND I WAKE UP.

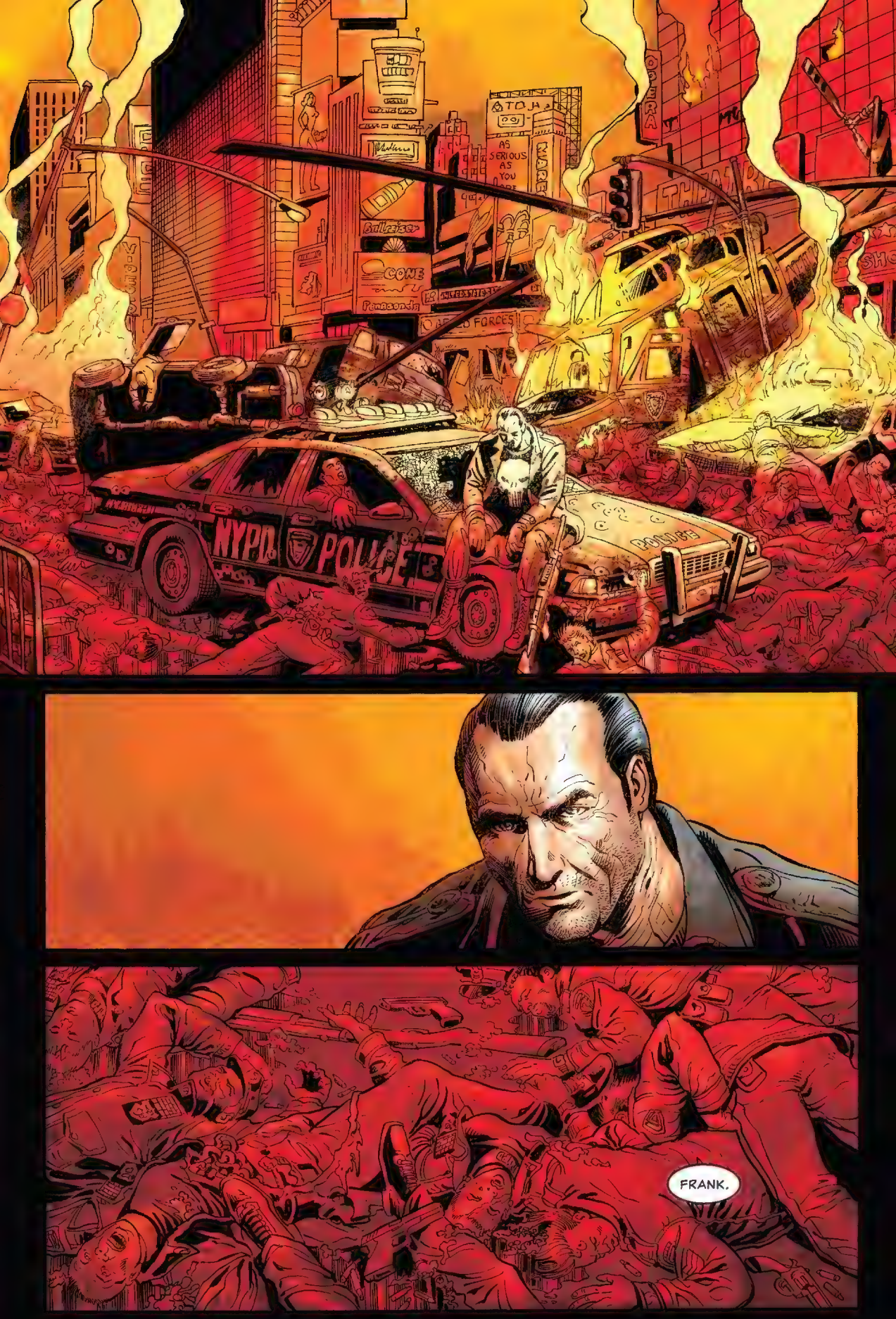
IT'S JUST A DREAM, I ALWAYS TELL MYSELF.
IT'S JUST A DREAM.
IT'S JUST A DREAM.

PUNISHER #22

ALL I'M SAYIN', MAN--ALL I'M SAYIN' IS WHAT IF--
WILL YOU SHUT THE FUCK UP AND HELP ME WITH THIS?
BUT HE'S *OUT THERE* SOMEWHERE! HE'S KILLED LIKE A HUNDRED GUYS IN ONE NIGHT! HE'S *CHANGED*, HE'S NEVER BEEN CRAZY LIKE THIS BEFORE!
I MEAN LOOK AROUND YOU, THE STREETS ARE FUCKIN' EMPTY! NO ONE'S PULLIN' *SHIT* TONIGHT!
ALL THE MORE REASON FOR US TO SEIZE THE FUCKIN' MOMENT! NOW WILL YOU GIMME A GODDAMNED HAND HERE? *PLEASE?*
BUT WHAT IF HE COMES BY HERE AN' SEES US? WHAT IF THERE'S SOME BAD MOTHERFUCKERS LIVE ON THE NEXT BLOCK, AN' HE'S ON HIS WAY TO WHACK 'EM RIGHT NOW?
WHAT IF-- JUST BY A *BILLION TO ONE* FUCKIN' CHANCE--HE JUST *HAPPENS* TO BE IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD, AN' HE WALKS AROUND THE CORNER AN' HERE WE ARE BREAKIN' INTO THIS PLACE?
LISTEN TO ME. YOU HYSTERICAL FAGGOT.
HE IS *NOWHERE NEAR HERE.* HE'S GOT WAY BIGGER FISH TO FRY. HE HITS MOB GUYS AN' KILLERS AN' BIG-TIME, MAJOR-LEAGUE GANGSTERS-- NOT SOME PAIR OF ASSHOLES TRYNNA KNOCK OVER A JEWELRY STORE.
HE DOESN'T GIVE A *FUCK* ABOUT PEOPLE LIKE YOU AN' ME: OKAY?
BUT...
WHAT IF THAT'S NOT TRUE ANYMORE?

Up is Down and Black is White

Part Four


NYPD
POLICE
FRANK.

FRANK.
NYPD
POLICE
NYC POLICE
FRANK.
WE'RE STILL DEAD.

THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR RESTING MY EYES.
NEVER KNOWN ANGER LIKE THIS BEFORE.
NOT RAGING. NOT EVEN BURNING. JUST COLDER AND COLDER BY THE MINUTE.
BUILDING INEXORABLY.
TOWARDS SOMETHING THAT HAS TO BE.
DREAMS FILLING IN ALL THE WRONG GODDAMN DETAILS...
HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT ARM.

COME ON, NICKY...!
AFTER ALL THIS TIME, THE LEAST I'D EXPECT--
RAWLINS, WHAT THE FUCK IS IT YOU *WANT?*
I AIN'T FEELIN' THE LOVE HERE, NICKY. I GOTTA TELL YOU THAT.
LONG STORY SHORT, I'M HUNTIN' THE SAME BIG GAME YOU ARE. I WANNA BE IN AT THE DEATH.
NO FUCKIN' WAY. BACK OFF.
LISTEN--
NOT A FUCKIN' CHANCE IN HELL. THIS AIN'T LIKE BOSTON, THIS AIN'T SOME BUSINESS THING WHERE I MOVE SMACK FOR YOU AN' YOUR COMPANY PALS.
THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING I'LL EVER DO, THIS IS *KILLIN' THE FUCKIN' PUNISHER...*
AN' WHO YOU GONNA GET TO DO IT? *THEM?*
A BUNCHA TENTH-RATE GUINEAS-- AN' WHATEVER THE HELL THE THING WITH THE TITS IS--AGAINST A GUY LIKE FRANK CASTLE? YOU DONE WELL *SO* FAR, NICKY, YOU DREW HIM OUT REAL GOOD, BUT YOU AN' I BOTH KNOW THIS IS WHERE YOUR PLAN GOES TO SHIT...!
I AIN'T LISTENIN' TO A FUCKIN' WORDA THIS.
YOU SET HIM UP. I TAKE HIM OUT. REAL SIMPLE.
COME ON, DON'T YOU REMEMBER HOW GOOD WE USED TO BE?

WHAT'RE YOU DOIN'?
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M DOIN'.
YOU STAY THE FUCK AWAY FROM ME...
I CAN'T FIND HIM MYSELF.
NO MORE'N YOU CAN KILL HIM YOURSELF.
BUT TOGETHER... HELL, WE CAN DO ANYTHIN' WE WANT.
COME ON, NICKY.
LET YOU CALL ME *TEX*, IF YOU WANT.
OH, SWEET FUCK.

OH, LOVELY.
TO THINK HE USED TO EAT ME OUT WITH THAT MOUTH...
I CAN ALWAYS RELY ON YOU FOR REFINED CONVERSATION, O'BRIEN.
HERE, MILK, NO SUGAR.
PARKING & CAR WASH
GIORGIO'S CAFE
JUST LIKE OLD TIMES, ISN'T IT?
IT IS, EXCEPT FOR THE FACT THAT I DON'T HAVE MY BALLS ANY MORE. AND DON'T TELL ME TO QUIT MOPING AGAIN, OKAY?
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY THE FUCK I'M HERE...
I SAVED YOUR LIFE. YOU'RE HELPING ME OUT.
WE'RE HERE BECAUSE I'M HUNTING RAWLINS.
BECAUSE ON OUR HONEYMOON--MORE OF A COVERT INSERTION NORTH OF KABUL, BUT YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN--HE SHOVED ME OUT OF A SHOT-UP HUEY TO SAVE HIS CARGO OF HEROIN.
THEN THE MUJAHS GOT ME.

WHAT HAPPENED...?
WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU THINK HAPPENED?
SO THAT'S CAVELLA UPSTAIRS, I REMEMBER HIM FROM LAST TIME. LET'S SEE WHO ELSE WE'VE GOT.
O'BRIEN...
GIVE ME A SECOND HERE.
JESUS.
CASTLE FUCKING FINISHED THESE PEOPLE LAST YEAR. THIS BUNCH ARE JUST THE WALKING DEAD.
GIVE UP AND GO HOME, BOYS, THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING...
AND...UM. EXCEPT THERE IS SOMETHING FAMILIAR ABOUT HER.
IF FEMALE INDEED SHE IS.
I NEVER KNEW.
ROTH, DON'T GET SENTIMENTAL ON ME, OKAY?

SO WHAT WE'RE SAYING HERE...IS IF WE DON'T STOP THIS GUY FROM WIPING OUT OUR CRIMINAL SCUM...
IT'S GOING TO LOOK LIKE SHIT...
AH, MISTER MAYOR, I'D ADVISE AGAINST USING WORDS LIKE--
THIS IS ONE OF THOSE TIMES WHEN I DON'T GIVE A FUCK WHAT PEOPLE PUT IN THEIR MEMOIRS, PETER.
WE'VE GOT EVERY DIRTBAG FROM HARLEM TO BENSONHURST SCREAMING FOR PROTECTION. WE'VE GOT THEIR ASSHOLE LAWYERS TALKING CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS--"THEY KNOW THEY CAN'T INDICT MY CLIENT, SO INSTEAD THEY THROW HIM TO THE PUNISHER," THAT'S MY FAVORITE QUOTE SO FAR.
CASTLE LEFT ONE WARM BODY AT THE SITE OF EACH MASSACRE. ALL THREE GAVE US THE SAME MESSAGE: WE HAVE TO BURY HIS FAMILY.
FIFTY-NINE DEAD. FIFTY-NINE. WE CANNOT HAVE ANOTHER NIGHT LIKE LAST NIGHT.
COMMISSIONER?

WELL, I THINK WE ALL KNOW HOW THE N.Y.P.D. FEELS ABOUT THE PUNISHER...
HEY, FAUNTLEROY: YOU WANT MY OFFICERS TO GO AFTER THAT SON OF A BITCH, JUST GIVE US THE GODDAMNED WORD.
CAN YOU KILL HIM?
GOT TO FIND HIM FIRST, MISTER MAYOR. THEN--
WELL, ONE THING ABOUT CASTLE, HE'S ALWAYS BEEN SMART ABOUT NIXING CIVILIAN CASUALTIES. I PUT ENOUGH TACTICAL PEOPLE IN THE FIELD TO TAKE HIM DOWN...AND...
THEY CAN'T GIVE THE SAME GUARANTEE.
...NO.
CATCH HIM?
SEE ABOVE.
ALSO, YOU SEND HIM TO PRISON, HE'S GONNA SEND THE OTHER INMATES OUT IN BAGS. YOU GOTTA ASK YOURSELF HOW *THAT'S* GONNA LOOK.
HOPE HE JUST STOPS?
WE CAN'T BE SEEN TO GIVE IN TO *TERRORISM*...
THERE'S A WORD I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IN CONNECTION WITH THIS. NOT NOW, NOT EVER.
FRIEND OF MINE AT THE *TIMES* SAYS THEY'VE BEAT YOU TO IT ON THAT ONE, SIR.

...AND THE GOOD NEWS...?
CRIME'S DOWN.
FUCK YOU, JONATHAN.
MISTER MAYOR...
MAYBE IT WOULD HELP IF WE TALKED--OFF THE RECORD FOR A MINUTE--ABOUT WHAT WE CAN BE CERTAIN OF HERE.
IF WE DON'T BURY HIS FAMILY, CASTLE KEEPS RIGHT ON KILLING. IF WE DO, HE GOES STRAIGHT FOR NICKY CAVELLA--I DON'T THINK ANYONE'S IN ANY DOUBT ABOUT THAT.
AT THAT POINT, ONE OF THREE THINGS HAPPENS. ONE, CASTLE KILLS CAVELLA--THEN HE GOES BACK TO HIS USUAL DOZEN MAGGOTS A WEEK, AND WE GO BACK TO LOOKING THE OTHER WAY. TWO, CAVELLA KILLS CASTLE--LESS LIKELY, BUT ALL IT LEAVES US WITH IS ANOTHER MAFIA PRICK TO DEAL WITH. BEEN THERE, DONE THAT.
THREE, THEY KILL EACH OTHER, AND WE OPEN THE GODDAMN CHAMPAGNE.
MM.
YOU SEE WHAT I'M SAYING--?
OH, I SEE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.
OKAY, PETER? I WANT YOU TO PUT A TEAM OF OUR SNEAKIEST SHITS TOGETHER. MAKE IT FAST, THE PRESS CONFERENCE HAS TO GO OUT BEFORE DARK.
I WANT YOU TO SPIN THE LIVING FUCK OUT OF THIS.

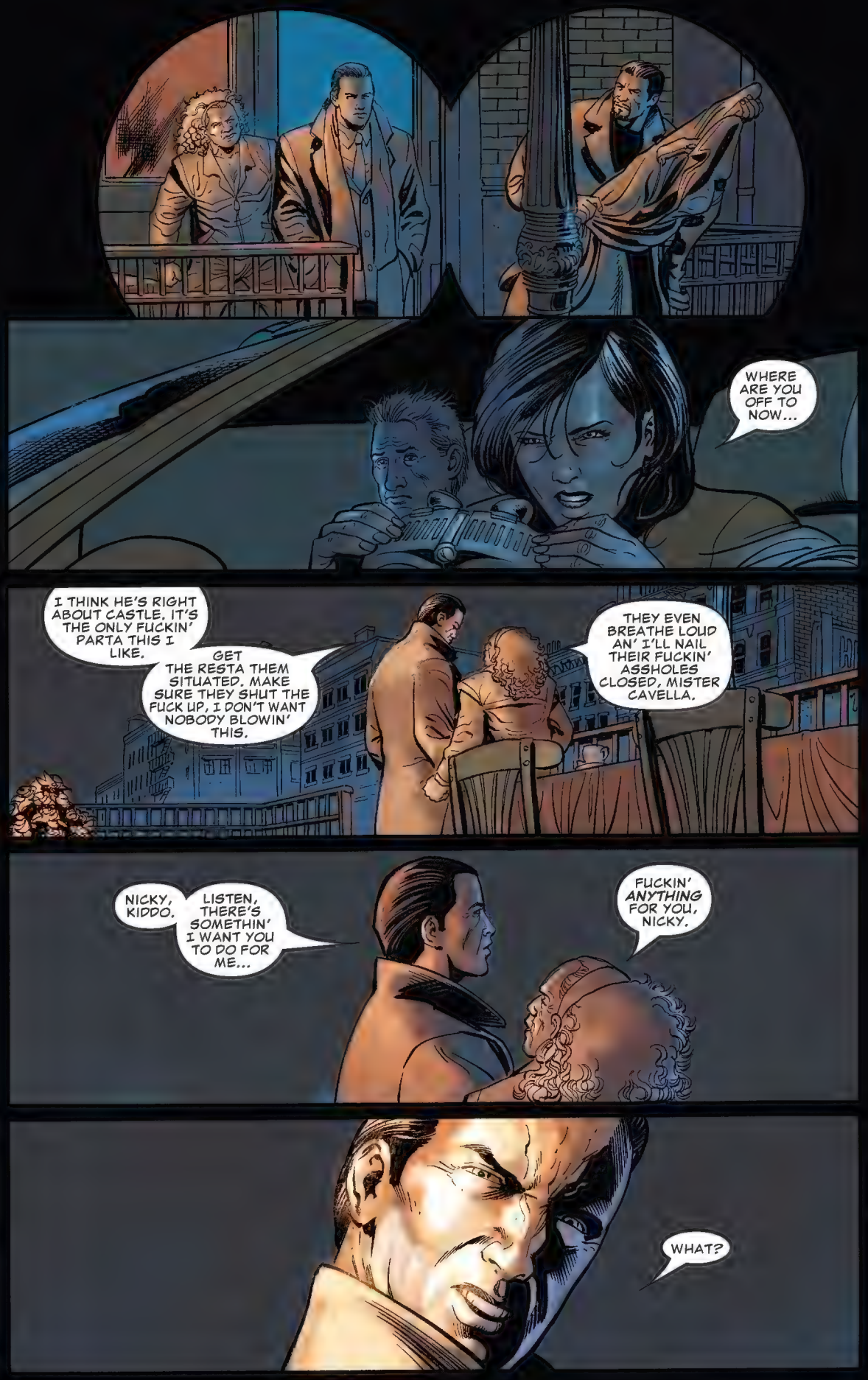
SO WHAT'S THE STORY WITH THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, ANYHOW?
FRIENDA MINE'S SISTER.
GUY WAS MY BEST HITTER. FUCKIN' DEVOTED TO ME.
HE GOT WHACKED, TERESA'S FULFILLIN' THE FAMILY TRADITION.
SHE'S GOT THE FUCKIN' HOTS FOR YOU, YOU DICK.
BULLSHIT...
YOU AIN'T SEEN HOW SHE LOOKS AT YOU? ACTUALLY, THAT KINDA FIGURES, YOU PROBABLY TRY NOT TO LOOK AT HER TOO MUCH.
THINK ABOUT IT: SHE USEDTA SEE YOU WITH HIM ALL THE TIME, YOU'RE THE BIG TOUGH WISEGUY, SHE'S ALWAYS WORSHIPPED YOU FROM AFAR...
BULLSHIT.
AN' WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT: THE ONLY WAY THIS WORKS IS IF YOU SHOW ME RESPECT IN FRONTA THE RESTA THEM. YOU GOTTA LAY OFF *THEM*, TOO, THAT WAS NOT COOL HOW YOU TOLD 'EM TO LEAVE US ALONE.
AN' YOU CAN'T SAY SHIT ABOUT--ABOUT ANY A' THIS, YOU HEAR ME?
ABOUT *FUCK ME, TEX! FUCK ME!*
ANY A' THAT?
YOU ALWAYS WERE A *FUCKIN' ASSHOLE--!*

DON'T OVERSTEP.
NEVER DID SEE MY NASTY SIDE, DID YOU, NICKY?
FUCKIN'--
HUSH, NOW.
I'LL PLAY NICE WITH THE GOOMBAHS. YOU DON'T GOT TO WORRY 'BOUT THAT. I'LL WASTE THE PUNISHER FOR YOU TOO, I GOT A SWEET LITTLE PLAN TO GET IT DONE.
AFTER THAT I'M GONE, NICKY. YOU CAN GET STARTED BEIN' CHIEF WOP--I'LL DISAPPEAR FOREVER, AN' YOU'LL ONLY SEE ME IN YOUR DREAMS.
BUT YOU FUCK ME, AN' I COME THROUGH ALIVE, I WILL MAKE YOU DIE SCREAMIN' FOR YOUR MOMMA. I CHECK OUT, AN' A CERTAIN HOME MOVIE I SHOT IN THE BOSTON RITZ-CARLTON WILL START DOIN' THE ROUNDS.
ONE VERY HUMILIATIN' YEAR LATER, SOME FRIENDS OF MINE'LL PUT A END TO ALL YOUR TROUBLES.
WHUH--!
"I KILLED MY WHOLE FAMILY, I FUCKED MY AUNTIE, I AM SUCH A BADASS...!"
YOU TALK IN YOUR SLEEP, YOU DUMB LITTLE CUNT.

...INITIAL STATEMENT HAS THEREFORE BEEN DEEMED PREMATURE, WITH THE INVESTIGATION MOVING IN OTHER DIRECTIONS, THE CASTLE FAMILY REMAINS WILL BE DECENTLY REBURIED, AS SOON AS APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE.
THE MAYOR AND THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE HAVE JOINED WITH ALL OF US AT THE D.A.'S OFFICE, IN HOPING THAT THIS TRAGIC AND DISTURBING MATTER CAN NOW BE DRAWN TO A CLOSE. WITH RESOLUTION COMES CLOSURE, WITH CLOSURE-- HEALING.
QUESTIONS? OKAY, ONE AT A TIME, AMANDA?
YES, WHY ISN'T THE MAYOR HERE TO DELIVER HIS MESSAGE OF CLOSURE AND HEALING IN PERSON?
WELL, IT'S NOT HIS MESSAGE, IT'S SOMETHING ON WHICH WE'RE ALL IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT. HE AND I BOTH FEEL THAT HIS DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IS UNNECESSARY; THIS OFFICE IS ACTUALLY STAFFED BY GROWN-UPS.
OH, JESUS...
AH, NEXT? TIM?
ARE WE GENUINELY EXPECTED TO BELIEVE--

OBVIOUS PLACE TO START IS TONY PIZZO'S.
LOW-LEVEL PUNK TURNED CAPO, IN WAY OVER HIS HEAD. CAVELLA WANTS A RANK OR TWO OF CANNON-FODDER. PIZZO AND HIS TRASH WOULD FIT THE BILL.
DEEP DOWN I KNOW THAT'S WHAT I'M BEING: OBVIOUS. THE ONE THING I NEVER DO IS WHAT'S EXPECTED OF ME.
BUT HERE I AM, ABOUT TO HIT A CREW HEAD-ON WHO KNOW I'M COMING, WHO'VE HAD ALL THE TIME THEY NEED TO PREP THE KILL-ZONE.
SOMETHING IN ME'S SAYING-- STOP. BACK OFF. RUN PROPER RECON. WAIT THEM OUT AND LET THEM SWEAT, THEN GO IN LIKE THE WRATH OF GOD.
BUT THIS COLD, WHITE FURY THAT I FEEL SAYS NO.
SUICIDE RUN.
IF I DIE NOW, A WORLD OF FUCKS WILL GO UNPUNISHED.
BUT I DRIVE ON.

YOU FUCKIN' CERTAIN ABOUT THIS?
NOTHIN'S CERTAIN WHEN YOU'RE DEALIN' WITH A GODDAMNED PSYCHOTIC.
BUT YOU MADE IT PERSONAL, AN' WE KNOW HE'S TAKEN IT PERSONAL. HE'S GONNA WANNA LOOK YOU IN THE EYE.
IT CAN'T BE INDOORS, THAT CLOSE-QUARTERS SHIT PLAYS TO ALL HIS STRENGTHS. DON'T WANT HIM GETTIN' IN AMONG THESE ELITE REPUBLICAN GUARDS OF YOURS, NEITHER.
ELITE FUCKIN' WHAT?
I WANT HIM IN PLAIN SIGHT FOR ONE SWEET, CLEAN SHOT...
SO YOU WANT ME TO SIT OUT FRONT HERE AN' WAIT LIKE A COMPLETE FUCKIN' ASSHOLE?
LIKE FUCKIN' *BAIT* IS WHAT IT COMES DOWN TO. AN' I'M SUPPOSED TO TRUST YOU TO NAIL THE PRICK BEFORE HE CANCELS MY FUCKIN' TICKET?
FIRST CLEAR SHOT I GET, I TAKE IT. THIS MOTHERFUCKER IS *WAY* TOO BADASSED TO MESS AROUND WITH.
YOU SIT RIGHT HERE.
DON'T YOU DARE SMILE; YOU SET HIM OFF AN' I WON'T GET MY SHOT. THAT'S WHEN HE SINKS HIS TEETH IN, AN' WE GO OUT LIKE ALL THE OTHERS.
YOU STAY STILL AN' SO WILL HE.


WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO NOW...
I THINK HE'S RIGHT ABOUT CASTLE. IT'S THE ONLY FUCKIN' PARTA THIS I LIKE.
GET THE RESTA THEM SITUATED. MAKE SURE THEY SHUT THE FUCK UP, I DON'T WANT NOBODY BLOWIN' THIS.
THEY EVEN BREATHE LOUD AN' I'LL NAIL THEIR FUCKIN' ASSHOLES CLOSED, MISTER CAVELLA.
NICKY, KIDDO.
LISTEN, THERE'S SOMETHIN' I WANT YOU TO DO FOR ME...
FUCKIN' *ANYTHING* FOR YOU, NICKY.
WHAT?

MOTHER-
FUCKER.
ALREADY FEEL THE CROSSHAIRS ON ME.
I KNOW THAT SHITHOLE'LL EXPLODE WITH WISEGUYS, THE INSTANT I POINT THE GUN.

BUT I DRIVE ON.
EXACTLY WHAT'S EXPECTED OF ME.
WHAT THIS FROZEN RAGE DEMANDS OF ME.
AND...
UH?

WAS THAT WHAT I WANTED?
TO SEE HIS FEAR UP CLOSE?
MUST BE.
I FEEL THE MUSCLES MOVING IN MY ARMS, THE SHOTGUN COMING UP TO FIND ITS TARGET.
I'LL GET ONE SHOT OFF, JUST BEFORE I'M HIT.
UUHHAH!
HE'S DOWN, HE'S DOWN! COME ON!
IT WASN'T--
HE'S FUCKIN' DOWN, YA PRICKS!
WHO THE FUCK IS--
CASTLE!

CASTLE, GET THE FUCK OUT OF THERE!
GO!!
LEANDRO FERNANDEZ '05
S Hanna

PUNISHER #23

Up is Down and Black is White

Part Five

YOU FUCKIN' MUTT.
SHOULD'VE KNOWN CAVELLA'D HAVE HIS BACKUP WAITING.
NO LESS THAN I DESERVE.
BEEN WALKING AROUND LIKE A MAN IN A DREAM.
VEST SOAKED UP THE SHOT, BUT NOT THE IMPACT.
FEELS LIKE I JUST TOOK A WRECKING BALL TO THE CHEST.
WHICH MEANS ALL I CAN DO IS LIE HERE--
WHILE MY LUNGS REMEMBER HOW TO BREATHE.
YOU FAGGOTS QUIT PUMPIN' EACH OTHERS' DICKS AN' NAIL THAT FUCKIN' SHOOTER!

BEST I CAN DO, BIG MAN.
SHOULD HAVE RUN WHEN I TOLD YOU.
O'BRIEN?
O'BRIEN, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HERE...!
THROW THAT LUMP OF SHIT IN THE TRUNK FOR ME, WILL YOU?
JESUS FUCK!
I GOTTA GET HIM TO A HOSPITAL! YOU TAKE CARE A' CASTLE!
THE SHOOTER--
SHE'S FUCKIN' GONE, YA LITTLE DOUCHE!

WHAT, JUST 'CAUSE SHE STOPPED?
I'M TELLIN' YA, THERE'S NO ONE FUCKIN' THERE!
THEN LET'S SEE YOU STAND UP, IF YOU'RE SO FUCKIN' SURE!
WHAT WAS ALL THE SHOOTING? I THOUGHT YOU WERE JUST GOING TO KILL RAWLINS AND RUN?
I DON'T KNOW, I SAW WHAT HE--
WHAT THE HELL ARE THOSE ASSHOLES WAITING FOR?
WE CAME HERE TO WHACK THE PUNISHER! YOUR BOSS FUCKIN' ORDERED IT! NICKY CAVELLA HIMSELF!
YA WANNA DISOBEY HIS FUCKIN' WORD? FUCKIN' COCKSUCKERS, IS THAT WHAT YOU FUCKIN' WANT?!
...FUCK.
OKAY, WHAT'RE YA WAITIN' FOR?
SOMEONE TAKES A STEP TOWARDS ME.
DOESN'T GET SHOT, SO HE TAKES ANOTHER.
CAN I PULL THE FORTY-FIVE IN TIME?
CAN I EVEN LIFT MY GODDAMNED HAND?

WHAT--
WHUHH!!
TELL HIM TO GET IN THE CAR, ROTH.
G-G-GET IN THE CAR--!
TELL HIM TO MOVE HIS ASS.
AAAAH!
SCATTER--!
GET IN THE FUCKING CAR, YOU PRICK!
BEST OFFER I'M LIKELY TO GET ALL NIGHT.

USELESS FUCKIN' SISSIES...
FUCK 'EM.
CAR.
GET ME TO THE CAR.
SHE'S OUT!
WE GOOD TO GO?
YES!
AW, FUCK!
MISTER CAVELLA, THEY--
MISTER CAVELLA?

WHO ARE YOU?
I'M O'BRIEN, HE'S ROTH.
WHY'D YOU HELP ME?
GOOD QUESTION.
I FOUND MY DICKHEAD EX-HUSBAND GETTING READY TO TAKE A SHOT AT YOU. AFTER I KAYOED HIM, I JUST THOUGHT--WHAT THE HELL.
ANYONE THAT FUCK WANTS DEAD CAN'T BE ALL BAD.
NO COMPLAINTS, I HOPE. YOU WERE BEING A REAL ASSHOLE BACK THERE.
FAIR COMMENT.
FEEL LIKE I'M THINKING STRAIGHT FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE ALL THIS STARTED.
YOU WERE PART OF THAT C.I.A. CLUSTERFUCK A WHILE BACK. I REMEMBER YOU GOT SHOT.
LOT OF IT ABOUT.
WE'RE NOT WITH THE GOVERNMENT ANYMORE. YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, FEEL FREE TO JUMP OUT OF THE CAR.
THE TURD IN THE TRUNK, NOW--
HE'S STILL A HUNDRED PERCENT SPOOK.
3-591-905

FUCKIN' MUTTS DON'T KNOW WE'RE HERE...
LAST THING THEY'D EXPECT AFTER THAT SHIT--OH, FUCK...!
SURE YA DON'T WANNA GO TO THE HOSPITAL?
NOT WHILE WE'RE TRACKIN' CASTLE, NO FUCKIN' WAY.
JESUS, THANK GOD I WORE THIS GODDAMN THING...
IT GO THROUGH THERE? WHERE YOU'RE BLEEDIN'?
NO MORE'N ABOUT A QUARTER INCH. IT'S NOTHIN'.
BUT RIGHT OVER MY HEART, SHIT, I THOUGHT I WAS GONNA HAVE A CARDIAC BACK THERE...
LOOKED LIKE A COOZE. THAT SHOT YA, I MEAN.
NO SHIT.
WELL, WE CATCH UP WITH THESE FUCKS, I'LL GIVE THE BITCH A LITTLE LESSON IN PENETRATION.

O'BRIEN...?
RAWLINS.
WHY THE FUCK AIN'T I DEAD?
WANTED TO SEE IF YOU'D BE ANY USE TO ME. I'M A PENNILESS FUGITIVE, I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU COULD HELP WITH THAT.
THEN YOU'RE DEAD.
YOU WANT TO BUY YOURSELF AN EXTRA MINUTE OR TWO, YOU CAN TELL *HIM* WHY YOU WERE ALL SET TO VENTILATE HIS SKULL TONIGHT...
OH WHAT, OR ELSE YOU'RE GONNA TORTURE ME? THE FUCKIN' *COLOMBIANS* GOT ME IN NINETY-TWO, AN' NOW SOME PISSANT PSYCHO AN' THE BUKAKE QUEEN OF KABUL ARE GONNA MAKE *ME TALK?*

...I'M GOING TO HAVE TO GO.
YOU NEED TO KNOW WHAT HE KNOWS. I'M NO GOOD TO YOU, IF I STAY I'LL JUST KILL HIM.
I STILL HAVE QUESTIONS FOR YOU.
EITHER TRUST ME OR DON'T. BUT MAKE THAT PRICK TALK SOON, BECAUSE WHEN I COME BACK I'M GOING TO CAVE HIS FUCKING SKULL IN.
O'BRIEN?
LOOK... I KNOW I OWE YOU, BUT THIS IS MY FUCKING HOME, HERE...
NOT MUCH LONGER NOW, ROTH.
THEN YOU'LL NEVER HEAR FROM ME AGAIN.
WELL.
JUST YOU AND ME, THEN.

WANNA TAKE 'EM?
NOT 'TIL THE OTHERS CATCH UP WITH US. I WANT TONY PIZZO AN' HIS MAGGOTS BETWEEN ME AN' CASTLE, ONCE THE SHIT STARTS.
I FUCKIN' SHOT CASTLE...
HE DIDN'T LOOK TOO SHOT DRAGGIN' RAWLINS OUTTA THAT TRUNK.
SHIT, RAWLINS. I CAN'T HAVE ANYTHING HAPPENIN' TO THAT MOTHERFUCKER.
WE COULD DO IT, NICKY. YOU AND ME.
WE COULD DO IT RIGHT HERE AND NOW.
MM? NO.
WE WAIT FOR THE OTHERS, THAT'S THE ONLY WAY.

HE WAS SENT BY SOME PEOPLE I MANAGED TO GET PISSED AT ME. HOOKED UP WITH CAVELLA WHEN HE SAW HIM TRYING TO DRAW ME OUT.
PEOPLE?
ARMY AND AIR FORCE. LITTLE CABAL OF GENERALS, RAWLINS IS IN DEEP WITH THEM.
THE JET THE RUSSIANS SHOT DOWN END OF LAST YEAR-- TURNS OUT HE PUT THE HIJACKERS TOGETHER FOR THAT ONE.
THAT SOUNDS LIKE HIS STYLE, ALL RIGHT.
YOU'RE NOT THINKING OF HITTING THESE PRICKS, ARE YOU? BECAUSE I MEAN THE MILITARY, THAT'S ONE THAT'LL NEVER END...
CAVELLA'S MY PRIORITY. I'LL FIGURE MY NEXT MOVE AFTER HIM.
GET RAWLINS ON TAPE.
COME AGAIN?
IF HE'S DONE SHIT LIKE THE RUSSIAN THING, HE'S GOING TO HAVE THE SKINNY ON PLENTY OF OTHER DEEP, DARK, HIGHLY COMPROMISING LITTLE FUCK-JOBS. MAKE HIM SAY IT ON TAPE. BLACKMAIL THE GENERALS.
THEN GET HIM THE FUCK OUT OF HERE.
WILL HE DO IT?
HE'LL DO WHAT HE'S TOLD TO DO.

I'LL JUST GO AND BUY MORE JACK FUCKING DANIEL'S, THEN.
THIS COULD WORK. THEY CAN'T TOUCH YOU, THEY CAN FIX IT SO NO ONE TOUCHES ME... AND I STILL GET TO WASTE RAWLINS WHEN WE'RE DONE...
I HAVEN'T SAID I'M IN YET.
SO YOU HAVEN'T.
WHERE'S OUR BACKUP? WHERE ARE THE GUYS JUMPING OUT OF THE WALLS TO CAPTURE YOU AND HAUL YOU AWAY TO OUR SECRET BASE?
WE GOT SHIT-CANNED RIGHT AFTER THE THING LAST YEAR. WE'RE ON OUR OWN JUST LIKE YOU ARE.
THAT LOOKS PRETTY NASTY.
IT'S OKAY.
DON'T TALK STUPID.
JESUS, THE FUCKING BULLET'S STILL IN THERE, ISN'T IT?

ROTH'S FIRST AID KIT'S FOR SHIT, OR I'D USE BUTTERFLY CLAMPS FOR THIS...
YOU'RE DOING FINE.
I'VE BEEN IN JAIL FOR EIGHTEEN MONTHS. WHEN WE GET THROUGH HERE, YOU WANT TO GO JUMP IN THE SACK?
SURE.

WHERE THE FUCK ARE THOSE COCKSUCKERS...?
YA CHEST OKAY?
IT'S NOTHIN'.
YA WANT I SHOULD TAKE A LOOK?
YOU KNOW FIRST AID?
TERESA?
KIDDO?
NICKY, I...
I ALWAYS...

SLIP ME THE BEEF, NICKY--
WHAH?!
JUST LET IT HAPPEN--
WHAT- NO-GET THE FUCK--
AAAAAAHH!!
IT'S MEANT TO FUCKIN' BE--
GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME, YOU FUCKIN' PIG!!

WHAT'D YOU DO TO RAWLINS?
TOOK AN EYE OUT OF HIM.
WELL, WHY FUCK AROUND IF YOU DON'T HAVE TO.
WHY DID YOU HELP ME TONIGHT?
I THOUGHT ABOUT YOU AFTER LAST YEAR.
HOSPITAL, THEN BACK TO PRISON. I HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO THINK.

AT FIRST, ABOUT HOW DANGEROUS YOU WERE, AND HOW I REALLY, REALLY WANTED TO FUCK YOU. BUT NOT JUST THAT.
WHAT WE DID TO YOU, THE WHOLE OPERATION I WAS PART OF--THAT WAS WRONG. YOU'RE NOT SOME FUCKING ANIMAL TO BE TRAINED UP AND SET LOOSE ON ENEMIES OF THE STATE.
THE DICK IN CHARGE OFFERED ME A WAY TO GET OUT OF JAIL, SO I SIGNED UP. BUT THAT'S NO EXCUSE.
ANYWAY, I GET OUT AGAIN AND I'M HERE AT ROTH'S, AND I SEE ALL THE SHIT THAT FUCK DID TO YOUR FAMILY.
BELIEVE ME, I KNOW.
AND SOME THINGS...SOME THINGS SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO ANYONE, CASTLE.
SO, TONIGHT I TAKE RAWLINS DOWN, AND I LOOK OVER AND SEE YOU WALKING INTO THE LION'S DEN LIKE YOU'VE GOT A GODDAMN DEATH WISH--WHICH MAKES SENSE, GIVEN WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH--
AND I DON'T KNOW. ALL I COULD THINK WAS...IT SHOULDN'T END LIKE THIS.
SAME THING WHEN WE RAN THE PRICK DOWN WITH THE CAR.
I'M AN IDIOT, IS WHAT IT IS; ALL THESE YEARS OF WETWORK HELL AND I'M STILL THINKING GOOD GUYS AND BAD GUYS.

HOW LONG?
THEY RECRUITED ME AT PRINCETON, SENIOR YEAR. I'LL BE THIRTY-NINE IN DECEMBER.
ALMOST EVERYONE I'VE EVER BEEN WITH HAS BEEN PART OF IT, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. THREE HUSBANDS, INCLUDING THE ASSHOLE IN THE KITCHEN. EVERYONE'S BEEN...RUINED, SOMEHOW.
I ALWAYS SEEM TO FALL FOR THE WRONG FUCKING GUY.
DON'T TALK STUPID.
DON'T FLATTER YOURSELF, BIG MAN.

YEAH?!
TONY, WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU MEAN? WHAT?
LISTEN, ASSHOLE, YOU AND THOSE OTHER HOMOS GET DOWN HERE RIGHT NOW--
JESUS FUCKIN' CHRIST.
THE FUCKIN' PUSSIES ARE TOO SCARED.
I'M GONNA HAVE TO GO TALK TO THEM. GONNA TAKE THE CAR.
YOU STAY HERE AN' WATCH THE PLACE, OKAY? DON'T DO ANYTHING, DON'T GO IN, JUST WATCH--YOU UNDERSTAND?
YEAH.
YOU... WANT MY JACKET?
NO.

PUNISHER #24

Up is Down and Black is White

Conclusion

HHNNNH
WHAT THE FUCK--
WHORE!
AAAH--YA FUCKIN'--
I'LL FUCKIN' KILL EVERY FUCKIN' ONE A' YA!
YOU!!

FUCKIN' BITCH WHORE!
UNNHH!
YOU FUCKIN' FUCKED HIM! THE FUCKIN' MUTT KILLED MY BROTHER AND YOU FUCKED HIM!
YAAAH--!
AN' NO ONE FUCKS ME NO ONE NO ONE FUCKS MEEEEEEE
WHAT'S ALL THE GODDAMN--
AAAH--!
AAAAAAAAAAH!!
FUCK YOU, FRANKENCUNT--

NAH!
NAAAAAHHH!!
OO BITH!
RRAAAAHH!
MOTHERFUGGER!!

ILL OO--
ILL OO ALL--
HHNNNHH!
NNRRR!
OO-- FUGGIN--
UH?
RIB OOR DIG OV
STIG ID UB A BITH ATH
O'BRIEN--
C... COMING...

HOLY SHIT...
GIVE HER THE REST.
WELL, I'M AWAKE.
YEAH.

WHAT THE FUCK DO YOU MEAN, FUCK ME?
ATM
JESUS, WHAT'S IT SOUND LIKE?
I'VE HAD ENOUGHA THIS...
WE AIN'T GONNA BE YOUR CANNON FODDER, CAVELLA,
WE'RE GOIN' HOME.
...YOU WANNA RUN THAT BY ME AGAIN, KID?
OH, FUCK YOUR STUPID, WISEGUY BULLSHIT...!
NICKY CAVELLA, MISTER SCARY REP MOTHERFUCKER, GONNA COME DOWN HERE AN' SOLVE ALL OUR GODDAMN PROBLEMS--AN' THE FIRST SHIT WE GET INTO, WE GOT FIVE GUYS DEAD AN' TWO MORE INNA HOSPITAL. MY PLACE LOOKS LIKE A BOMB HIT IT, I'M GONNA HAVE COPS UP MY ASS FROM NOW 'TIL FOREVER.
YOU AN' YOUR PSYCHO BITCH GIRLFRIEND, YOU WERE USIN' US OUT THERE. JUST LIKE YOU ALWAYS DO, JUST LIKE ANYONE HAS ANYTHIN' TO DO WITH YOU GETS FUCKED.
TONY...LET'S NOT PRETEND FOR A SECOND YOU GOT ANYTHIN' EVEN LOOKS LIKE A CHOICE RIGHT NOW.
EVERY SINGLE ONE A' YOU JERK-OFFS, YOU SWORE AN OATH...

BIG FUCKIN' DEAL...
YEAH, FUCK THAT...
FUNNY THING ABOUT THAT SHIT, CAVELLA. OMERTA AN' LOYALTY AN' ALLA RESTA IT.
WORKS OUT REAL FUCKIN' WELL FOR GUYS LIKE YOU.
NEVER SEEMS TO DO MUCH GOOD FOR GUYS LIKE US.
ONE LAST TIME, ASSHOLE: I AM YOUR BOSS.
THAT MEANS YOU--
SO WHAT YA GONNA DO IF WE SAY FUCK YOU?
HAVE US CLIPPED? SEND SOME GUYS OVER? CLEAR IT WITH THE FAMILIES, TALK TO PAULIE WHATEVER-THE-FUCK?
EXCEPT YA CAN'T, CAN YA, CAVELLA?
'CAUSE NO ONE'S LEFT.
'CAUSE THE FUCKIN' PUNISHER KILLED 'EM ALL.

I THOUGHT IT WAS HIM. HIM IN A WIG.
I THOUGHT HE'D COME BACK FOR MY DICK.
THANKS FOR THE UPDATE, ROTH.
NICE JOB ON LOOKOUT, BY THE WAY.
FUCK YOU.
THIS IS STILL BLEEDING HERE. I MEAN IT'S WAY TOO HIGH FOR YOUR HEART, BUT ALL THE SAME--
I'LL SEE TO IT LATER. JUST SEW IT UP FOR NOW.
YOU DIG UP THAT CAMCORDER YET?
UH? OH. YEAH.
YOU WANT TO TAPE RAWLINS NOW?
NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT.
TRUE.
HE PROBABLY CAN'T WAIT TO GET STARTED.

REC
...CUT.
OKAY, THAT'S A WRAP.

FUCKIN' BITCH.
IF YOU'VE DONE EVEN HALF THE SHIT YOU JUST OWNED UP TO, I'LL TAKE THAT AS A COMPLIMENT.
ACTUALLY, THAT'S A POINT. YOU THINK HE IS TELLING THE TRUTH, CASTLE?

KEEP HIM THE FUCK AWAY FROM ME--!
I THINK SO.

WE'RE GOING TO MAKE COPIES OF THIS, GET THEM STASHED AWAY, YOU START SHOOTING THE PREQUEL.
HUH?
I WANT THE REST OF HIS INSPIRING TALE RECORDED BEFORE I WASTE HIM. THE RUSSIAN THING IS FOR CASTLE'S GENERALS--EVERYTHING THE PRICK DID BEFORE THEN, A TAPE OF THAT SHIT SHOULD GET ME OFF THE PENTAGON'S LIST.

WHAT ABOUT THE DEAD BODY IN MY BEDROOM?
AND ROTH: NO MATTER HOW FUCKED HE LOOKS NOW--

THIS SON OF A BITCH IS STILL LETHAL.

WE COPY THE TAPE AND YOU'RE GONE, RIGHT?
CAVELLA.
I WAS THINKING, JUST NOW.
THIS IS OUR CURRENCY, ISN'T IT?
PEOPLE LIKE US.
GO ON.

THIS PLACE WE LIVE IN.
WHAT CAVELLA DID TO YOUR FAMILY. ALL THE PEOPLE YOU TOOK OUT SINCE. WHAT YOU DID TO RAWLINS--THAT IS NOT ...NORMAL, NOT BY ANYBODY'S STANDARDS. BUT YOU TOLD ME AND I DIDN'T EVEN BLINK.
WE WADE THROUGH SLAUGHTER LIKE IT WAS RAIN. WE USE LIES FOR LANGUAGE, BLACKMAIL FOR CURRENCY. IT'S SECOND NATURE TO US.
I LOOK AT MY LIFE, AND I CAN'T REMEMBER A TIME WHEN THE WHOLE FUCKING WORLD WASN'T TURNED THE WRONG WAY ROUND.
UP IS DOWN.
BLACK IS WHITE.
ONE DAY YOU WAKE UP AND YOU SEE THAT'S HOW THE WORLD IS.
MAN, YOU WANT ME TO SHIT MYSELF RIGHT HERE IN YOUR FUCKIN' KITCHEN? COME ON...
YEAH, YEAH, YEAH.

MICK CASE
THE FAG SIX
JESUS CHRIST.
THE MOB
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE THIS.
WHAT'S HE LOOKING FOR...?
DOESN'T KNOW SHE'S DEAD YET.
WATCH THE CIVVIES.
SHIT--
TIRES.
YAAAAH!

MOTHERFUCKER...!
OH, JESUS--
CASTLE, YOU GET THE FUCK BACK!
AAAH!!
YOU WANT THIS?
WAAAH--!
YOU WANT THIS, ASSHOLE? DEAD FUCKIN' KID ON YOUR CONSCIENCE, IS THAT WHAT YOU FUCKIN' WANT?
GUNS DOWN. BACK OFF.
EITHER I WALK OUTTA HERE OR I BLOW THE LITTLE FUCK ALL OVER YOU, IT'S YOUR CALL...
CASTLE?

YOU WON'T SHOOT HIM.
YOU'RE A COWARD.
YOU...
YOU KNOW WHO I FUCKIN' AM...?
I AM NICKY CAVELLA.
DON'T YOU KNOW THE SHIT I FUCKIN' DID...?
I KNOW YOU ALWAYS GET SOMEONE ELSE TO DO THE DYING FOR YOU.
PSYCHO REP ONLY TAKES YOU SO FAR. AFTER THAT, YOU'VE NOTHING.
HURT THE BOY AND YOU DIE BAD, YOU KNOW THAT.
BUT THERE'S A PART OF YOU THAT STILL THINKS IF YOU LET HIM GO, YOU'VE GOT A CHANCE.
AND THAT PART OF YOU JUST WON'T SHUT UP.

RUN!!
RUN! DON'T LOOK BACK, JUST GO LIKE HELL! RUN!
B-510-888-G
CAVELLA.

ROTH! CHANGE OF PLAN!
THERE'S GOING TO BE COPS ALL OVER THE PLACE, WE'RE GETTING THE FUCK OUT!
SHOULDN'T BRING PEOPLE INTO THIS WORLD.
I GUESS I FORGOT THAT.
YOU SHOULD GET OUT OF TOWN AND NOT COME BACK.
RAWLINS.

P...
PLEASE...
WHAT GOOD D'YOU THINK THAT'LL DO?
WHAT--
OH NO. NO. NO. WAIT A FUCKIN' MINUTE--!
NOT THIS! NOT LIKE THIS! I DON'T WANNIT LIKE THIS, I DON'T WANNA FUCKIN' DIE OUT HERE!
NO!!

GOT NO IDEA WHAT THAT WAS ALL ABOUT.
OR THIS.
JESUS CHRIST, HOLY FATHER, HOLY MOTHER FORGIVE ME--PLEASE GOD FUCKIN' FORGIVE ME...!
I DIDN'T MEAN IT! I TAKE IT ALL BACK, ALL OF IT, I SWEAR TO CHRIST I DO!
PLEASE, PLEASE, I'M BEGGIN' YOUR FORGIVENESS! I HUMBLY THROW MYSELF ON YOUR ETERNAL, BLESSED MERCY! I WON'T SAY--THAT THING I SAID I'D SAY! I WON'T!
I REPENT MY SINS, ALLA TERRIBLE THINGS I DID! MY WRONGFUL PRIDE! I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY!
IN THE END, THE SHOOTING STOPPED AND THE GUNSMOKE CLEARED, AND I COULD SEE AGAIN.
MARIA AND LISA AND FRANK JUNIOR ARE GONE WHERE NOBODY CAN EVER HURT THEM.
NOTHING SHIT LIKE THIS CAN DO WILL CHANGE THAT.

IN A YEAR OR TWO, WHEN THE COPS GIVE UP SURVEILLANCE, I'LL TAKE THE F TRAIN OUT TO GREENWOOD AND STAND IN FRONT OF THE STONE.
IN THE SUNSHINE, LIKE ON THE MORNING WHEN I LOST THEM.
IF WHAT CAVELLA DID CAN STOKE THE FLAMES, RAISE UP OLD NIGHTMARES-- NO MATTER HOW FAR INTO HELL I GO, EVENTUALLY MY VISION CLEARS.
I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT TO DO.
LIKE ALWAYS.
YOU'RE JUST GONNA SHOOT ME?
I THOUGHT...
LOW IN THE STOMACH.
YOUR GUTS'LL FILL UP WITH SHIT. YOU'LL DIE OF BLOOD POISONING, MAYBE TAKE A COUPLE OF NIGHTS TO DO IT.
NO ONE'LL HEAR YOU, WAY OUT HERE.
YOU MADE IT PERSONAL, CAVELLA.
BUT ALL THAT BUYS YOU IS A LITTLE MORE PAIN THAN MOST.

OUT HERE IN THE WOODS, THE AIR IS CLEAR.
EVERYTHING'S THE RIGHT WAY ROUND.
THE WORLD IS TRUE.
TIME TO GO HOME.
THE END
LEANDRO FERNANDEZ 05

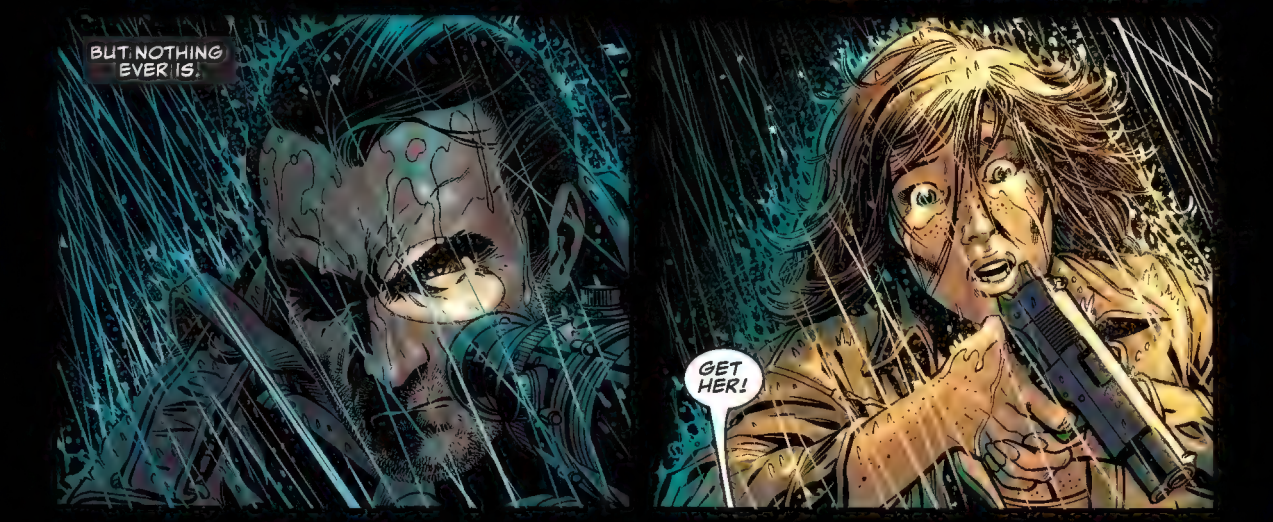
PUNISHER #25

THE SLAVERS

PART 1

BACK THEN, ANTONY PAVLA WAS JUST ANOTHER LUCKLESS PIECE OF SHIT WHO'D FOUND HIS WAY INTO MY GUNSIGHTS.
COKE AND SMACK. NOTHING SPECIAL, THE WAY I SAW IT AT THE TIME.

SHOULD HAVE BEEN SIMPLE.


BUT NOTHING EVER IS.
GET HER!

GET AFTER HER! KILL THE FUCKING WHORE!
CHRIST IN HEAVEN, WHAT THE FUCK DO I PAY YOU FOR?!
SHE WAS HEADED RIGHT FOR THE ALLEY NEXT TO MY POSITION, WHICH MEANT SHE DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS A DEAD END.
COULDN'T SEE ANY GUNS DOWN THERE. FIGURED I HAD TIME ENOUGH.
I WAS NEVER ONE TO LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH.

CAN I JUST SAY I'M SORRY AND WE'LL LEAVE IT AT THAT...?
POLICE
SURE.
OH, JESUS...
RUSS, I SWEAR TO GOD, I DON'T USUALLY LAUGH AT THAT SHIT. BUT PETERS TELLS THIS STUPID JOKE AND EVERYONE IN THE ROOM CRACKS UP, AND THAT WAS RIGHT WHEN YOU WALKED IN...
PARKER
WHAT WAS THE JOKE?
YOU KNOW. A...YOU KNOW.
A NIGGER JOKE.
MILLER
"NIGGER"?
...YES...
OH, OKAY, BECAUSE THE WORD I HEARD WAS FAGGOT. SO I GUESS I'VE GOT YOU ON TWO COUNTS, OFFICER MILLER.

FFUUUUCK...!
SHOULD HAVE JUST TAKEN THE FIFTH.
COME ON, YOU KNOW I AIN'T GOT A PROBLEM WITH YOU BEIN' THE WAY YOU ARE. WOULD I STILL BE PARTNERED UP WITH YOU IF I DID?
AN' I AIN'T NO BIGOT, I REALLY AIN'T. BUT SOMETIMES YOU HEAR A JOKE AN' YOU CAN'T HELP IT, YOU JUST START LAUGHIN'...
YOU... KNOW?
YOU REMEMBER THAT GUY I INTRODUCED YOU TO LAST SUMMER? THAT NIGHT AT SPARKY'S?
SPARKY'S... YEAH. GUY WITH THE GLASSES.
WELL, AFTER YOU LEFT, WE HAD A COUPLE MORE BEERS AND HE REFERRED TO YOU AS A BREEDER. WHAT'S IT LIKE RIDING AROUND ALL DAY WITH A BREEDER, THAT'S WHAT HE WANTED TO KNOW.
SO I HELD MY FIST UNDER HIS NOSE AND I SAID-- MARCIE IS MY PARTNER. YOU DISRESPECT HER AGAIN AND I WILL DO MY BEST TO PUT THIS THROUGH TO THE BACK OF YOUR SKULL.

JUST SO YOU KNOW.
I'LL MAKE IT UP TO YOU...
OH, YOU WILL.
WELL, YOU GET STARTED THINKIN' UP MY PENANCE--
ALL UNITS VICINITY OCEAN AND AVENUE V, SHOTS FIRED, SHOTS FIRED--
THAT'S US.
DISPATCH, THIS IS ONE-CHARLIE-FIVER RESPONDING, E.T.A. TWO MINUTES.
MILLER
OR SHOULD I JUST SAY WE STRAPPED? WE ROLLIN', YO?
WOULD THAT MAKE YOU FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE?
I SAID I WAS SORRY...
POLICE

I DIDN'T CARE WHO SHE WAS, OR WHY SHE'D MADE THE RUN AT PAVLA.
THE FOUR FUCKS WERE MY PRIORITY.
BEFORE THEY FOUND THEMSELVES ANOTHER MASTER.
P... PLEASE...
SO FUCKING DO IT...
DON'T WANT YOUR DICK SUCKED?
BUT I NEEDED A BETTER ANGLE.
WHAT WENT THROUGH THEM MIGHT GO ON DOWN TO HER.

LITTLE LESS VELOCITY, TOO.
FIVE-FIVE-SIX WOULD BOUNCE AROUND THE ALLEY LIKE GRENADE SHRAPNEL.
HOLD THE FUCKING KNIFE ON HER, MAN...
THINK I WANNA WATCH THIS SHIT?
NO!!

TURNED OUT THEY WERE PACKING AFTER ALL.
FOR ALL THE GOOD IT DID THEM.
WHATEVER HE WAS JABBERING, IT WASN'T ENGLISH. PAVLA WAS ALBANIAN--MAYBE HE WAS TOO.
BUT I'D KNOW THE LORD'S PRAYER IN ANY LANGUAGE.
GAVE HIM A MOMENT.
TO JUST BEFORE THE LINE ABOUT FORGIVENESS.

SHE WAS NO PROFESSIONAL. NO KILLER OF ANY KIND, WHEN YOU GOT A LOOK AT HER.
THAT'S WHERE MY INTEREST IN HER ENDED.
SO I THOUGHT.
HELP ME...!
COPS ARE COMING.
NO! NO COPS! THEY SEND ME BACK!
PLEASE!
YOU'RE ILLEGAL.
TOO BAD.
MOLDOVA...
NO! NO!
YOU ARE PUNISHER! I SEE ON T.V.! THESE MEN KILL MY BABY, THEY MURDER MY BABY!
THESE MEN?
OTHERS.
MANY OTHERS.
FREEZE!

HANDS! HANDS IN THE AIR!
YOU STAY THE FUCK AWAY FROM THAT WEAPON, BIG MAN!
OKAY. OKAY, BOTH OF YOU TURN TO FACE US.
SLOWLY...
OH, FUCK ME.
WAAAH!
FUCK! MOTHERFUCKER! LET HIM GO!
MARCIE!
NO CLEAR SHOT! I GOT NO CLEAR SHOT! FUCK! RUSS!

AAAAH--!
JESUS CHRIST--
QUIT MOVIN'--
COME ON IF YOU'RE COMING.
UH?
SON OF A BITCH!
ASSHOLE, YOU PUT THAT FUCKIN' GUN DOWN! YOU ARE UNDER ARREST!
GODDAMMIT, ARE YOU FUCKIN' LISTENIN' TO ME?!

COULD HE HAVE MADE A MISTAKE?
HE IS A LITTLE SHIT, VERA. HE IS NOT STUPID.
MM.
THE PUNISHER... I THOUGHT HIS THING WAS WITH THE ITALIANS? OR DRUG PEOPLE?
PAVLA WAS DRUG PEOPLE. AS FAR AS MOST PEOPLE WERE CONCERNED.
I DON'T WANT MY FATHER TO KNOW ABOUT THIS.
CRISTU...IS THAT REALLY THE BEST WAY...?
YOU KNOW HOW HE IS. HOW HE LIKES TO HANDLE THINGS.
IN THE OLD COUNTRY, ALL THAT SOUND AND FURY HAD ITS PLACE.
HERE-- WITH WHAT WE DO--
IT COULD BE THE END OF US ALL.

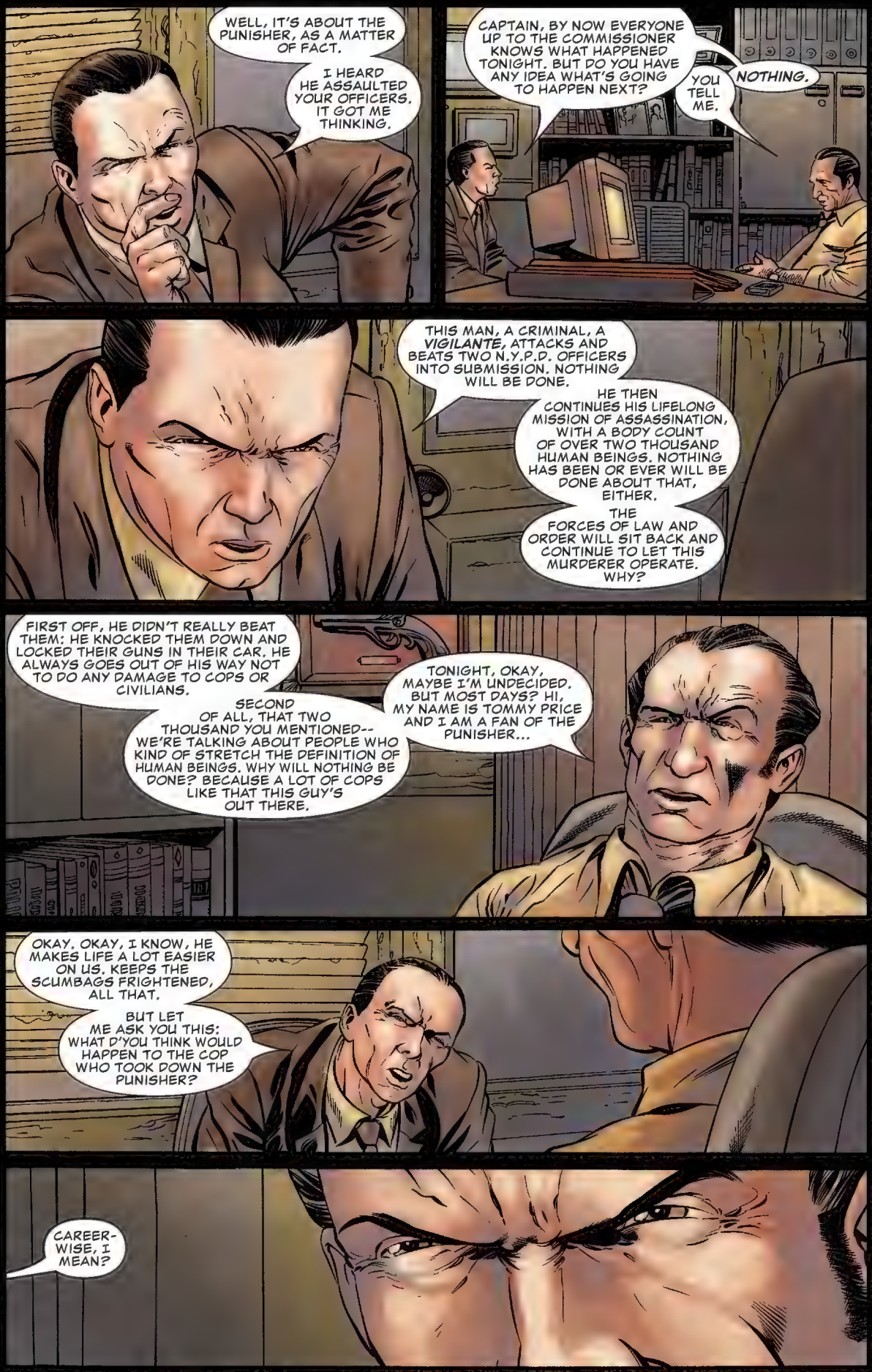
SO HOW DO WE HANDLE THINGS?
QUIETLY AND CAREFULLY.
WE RUN A BUSINESS, NOTHING MORE. WE ARE NOT WARLORDS FROM THE DARK AGES.
WELL... IF THE PUNISHER HAS KILLED JUST ANOTHER DRUG DEALER, HE HAS NO CAUSE TO LOOK DEEPER. PERHAPS WE DO NOTHING AT ALL.
PERHAPS.
PAVLA WAS DEAD, ALSO FOUR OF HIS MEN. BUT THE TWO COPS SAID THERE WAS A WOMAN THERE.
THE PUNISHER BEAT THE COPS AND TOOK THE WOMAN WITH HIM. WHY WOULD HE DO THAT? WHY TAKE HER?
WHY IS SHE THERE WHEN PAVLA DIES?
A WOMAN.
UH.
IT IS A POSSIBILITY. A VERY FAINT ONE, BUT WE CANNOT TAKE THE CHANCE.
WE NEED TO CALL THE LITTLE SHIT.

KEEP HIM OCCUPIED?
DO YOU KNOW WHO THIS GUY IS? NO, WAIT, LET ME ASK YOU SOMETHING: YOU EVER HEARD OF SOMEONE CALLED NICKY CAVELLA?
SCARIEST FUCKING WOP EVER, THE CREW THIS COCKSUCKER RAN TOOK OUT MORE PEOPLE THAN SADDAM. SO EVENTUALLY HE RUNS UP AGAINST THE PUNISHER, AND TWO WEEKS BACK SOME HUNTER FINDS WHAT'S LEFT OF HIM WAY OUT IN THE POCONOS.
THE FUCKING BIRDS HAD BEEN AT HIM, MAN, HIS FUCKING EYES WERE GONE...
I THOUGHT ALL I WAS SUPPOSED TO DO WAS FEED YOU INTEL--WHICH I ALREADY DID TONIGHT, AS I RECALL.
NO ONE SAID SHIT ABOUT ANYTHING LIKE THIS...
YEAH--I KNOW-- BUT--
FUCK, MAN...!
OKAY.
WARNING
OKAY, CRISTU.
OKAY.

SHE PASSED OUT BEFORE I DROVE FIVE BLOCKS. I FOUND OUT LATER SHE'D BEEN AWAKE FOR DAYS.
SHE WOULDN'T REMEMBER GETTING HERE, WAS THE POINT.
NOT LIKE ME TO PLAY WHITE KNIGHT, BUT THE THING ABOUT THE BABY BUGGED ME.
IF IT WAS BULLSHIT-- NO HARM, NO FOUL, SHE COULD TAKE HER CHANCES ON THE STREET.
BUT I HAD A FEELING.
ABOUT THE LOOK SHE GAVE ME, BEGGING IN THE RAIN.
AAAAAAAHH
AAAAAAAHH

ANNA.
AAAAAAAAHH!
THERE WAS A LOT OF THAT. LOT OF SHOUTING; WORDS I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE.
SHE'D BEEN A LONG WAY INTO THE DARK, THAT MUCH WAS OBVIOUS. BEEN DAMAGED THERE, IN WAYS THAT RAN TOO DEEP TO BE FORGOTTEN.
IT WAS A THING I KNEW A LITTLE BIT ABOUT.

MOTHERFUCKER...
WANT TO GO HAVE A DRINK, TO CELEBRATE?
CELEBRATE WHAT?
NOT BEING DEAD.
ALL THINGS CONSIDERED.
MILLER
PARKER
CAPTAIN PRICE? STU WESTIN FROM THE ONE-FIVE. I WAS WONDERING IF I COULD HAVE A MINUTE?
CAPTAIN
DON'T SEE WHY NOT...
WAS THAT PARKER AND MILLER? THE TWO WHO RAN INTO THE PUNISHER?
THAT'S THEM.
THEY OKAY? THEY INJURED IN ANY WAY?
ONLY THEIR PRIDE. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, DETECTIVE?

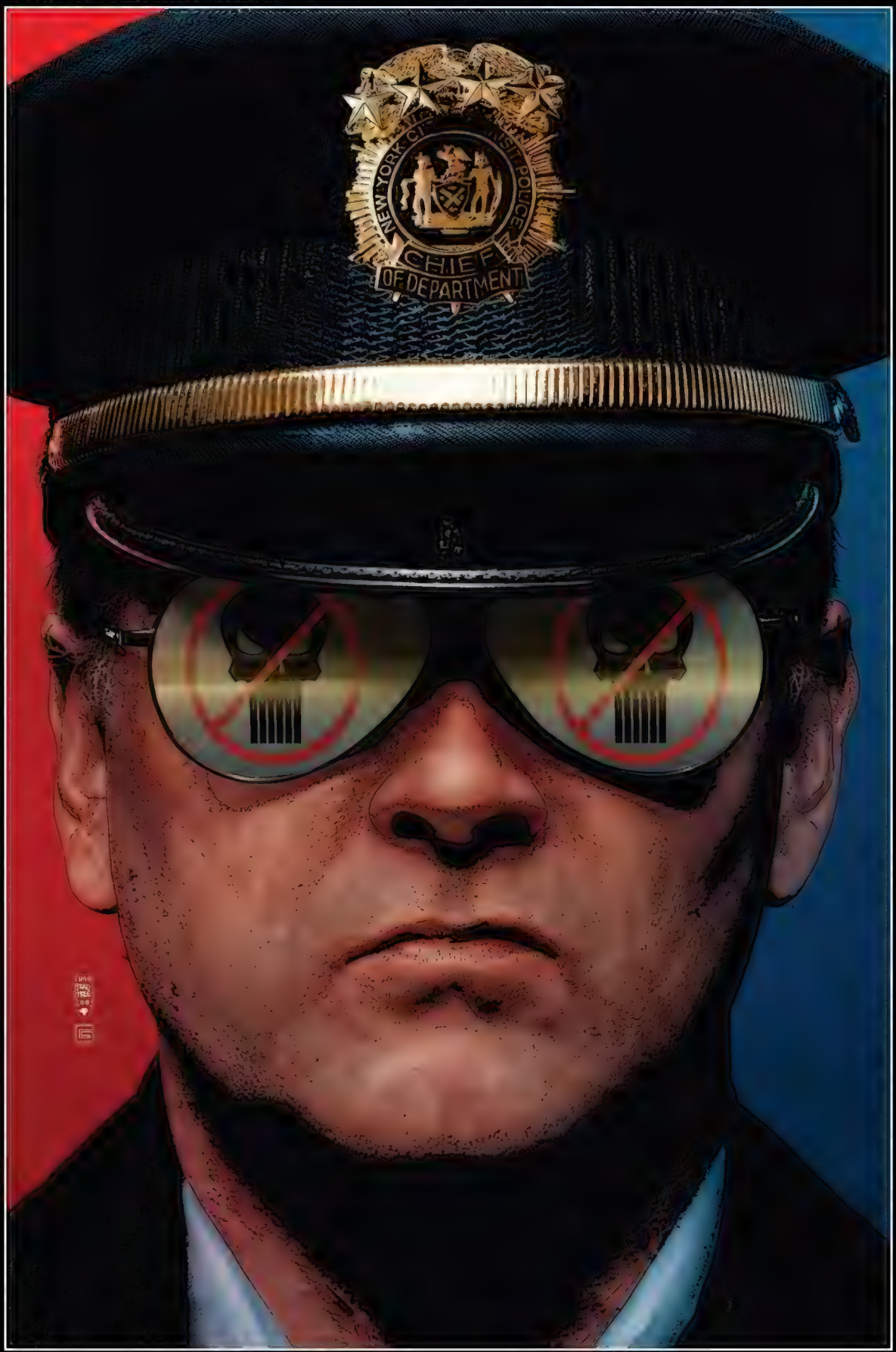

WELL, IT'S ABOUT THE PUNISHER, AS A MATTER OF FACT.
I HEARD HE ASSAULTED YOUR OFFICERS. IT GOT ME THINKING.
CAPTAIN, BY NOW EVERYONE UP TO THE COMMISSIONER KNOWS WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT. BUT DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT?
NOTHING.
YOU TELL ME.
THIS MAN, A CRIMINAL, A *VIGILANTE*, ATTACKS AND BEATS TWO N.Y.P.D. OFFICERS INTO SUBMISSION. NOTHING WILL BE DONE.
HE THEN CONTINUES HIS LIFELONG MISSION OF ASSASSINATION, WITH A BODY COUNT OF OVER TWO THOUSAND HUMAN BEINGS. NOTHING HAS BEEN OR EVER WILL BE DONE ABOUT THAT, EITHER.
THE FORCES OF LAW AND ORDER WILL SIT BACK AND CONTINUE TO LET THIS MURDERER OPERATE. WHY?
FIRST OFF, HE DIDN'T REALLY BEAT THEM: HE KNOCKED THEM DOWN AND LOCKED THEIR GUNS IN THEIR CAR. HE ALWAYS GOES OUT OF HIS WAY NOT TO DO ANY DAMAGE TO COPS OR CIVILIANS.
SECOND OF ALL, THAT TWO THOUSAND YOU MENTIONED-- WE'RE TALKING ABOUT PEOPLE WHO KIND OF STRETCH THE DEFINITION OF HUMAN BEINGS. WHY WILL NOTHING BE DONE? BECAUSE A LOT OF COPS LIKE THAT THIS GUY'S OUT THERE.
TONIGHT, OKAY, MAYBE I'M UNDECIDED. BUT MOST DAYS? HI, MY NAME IS TOMMY PRICE AND I AM A FAN OF THE PUNISHER...
OKAY. OKAY, I KNOW, HE MAKES LIFE A LOT EASIER ON US. KEEPS THE SCUMBAGS FRIGHTENED, ALL THAT.
BUT LET ME ASK YOU THIS: WHAT D'YOU THINK WOULD HAPPEN TO THE COP WHO TOOK DOWN THE PUNISHER?
CAREER-WISE, I MEAN?

OKAY, YOU KNOW, PEOPLE MIGHT PISS AND MOAN, BUT THERE'S NO WAY THEY COULDN'T PROMOTE YOU. THE PUBLICITY ALONE, MY GOD.
AND THAT'S ANOTHER THING; T.V.'S ALWAYS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR SUPERSTAR COPS...
I GET THE IDEA. HOW?
WE START WITH A PRESS CONFERENCE. YOU AND THE TWO HE BEAT UP.
WE SAY ENOUGH'S ENOUGH, THIS GUY'S KILLING SPREE WILL NO LONGER GO UNCHECKED. HIS BRUTAL ASSAULT ON TWO OF NEW YORK'S FINEST IS THE LAST STRAW: FROM HERE ON IN IT'S ZERO TOLERANCE ON THE PUNISHER.
IT MIGHT NOT WORK RIGHT AWAY, BUT IT'LL GIVE THE BASTARD SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT. AND ONCE THE WHOLE FORCE IS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR HIM...
AND HOW THE HELL DO WE MAKE THAT HAPPEN?
THE MEDIA DO. ONCE WE ANNOUNCE THIS INITIATIVE, THEY'LL BE WATCHING THE DEPARTMENT LIKE A BUNCH OF HAWKS.
I HAVE SOME PULL WITH THE GUYS IN THE PRESS OFFICE. I KNOW HOW TO PUT THIS THING TOGETHER. BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY, I'M ONLY A DETECTIVE...
SAY YOU WRITE THIS UP AND I SEND IT UPSTAIRS WITH MY BACKING--WHICH IS NOT INCONSIDERABLE, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF. WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?
WHAT'S YOUR ANGLE, DETECTIVE WESTIN?
CAPTAIN...THE MOTHERFUCKER BUGS ME. HE ALWAYS HAS.
WE ARE COPS.
AND WHAT'S RIGHT'S RIGHT.

WHERE AM I?
YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW.
YOU CAN GO WHENEVER YOU WANT. EXCEPT I'LL HAVE TO SEDATE YOU AND LEAVE YOU SOMEWHERE.
EAT YOUR DONUT.
ALL THESE GUNS. I SEE ON T.V., THE PUNISHER, BUT...
IS REALLY TRUE.
IS REALLY TRUE.
YOU FINISH YOUR BREAKFAST, I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU.
MY NAME IS VIORICA.
RIGHT.

LATER ON, SHE TOLD ME THE WHOLE STORY.
ABOUT THE DAY SHE LEFT HER VILLAGE, ABOUT THE OLD MAN, ABOUT CRISTU AND VERA.
ABOUT THE THING HER FATHER SAID.
ABOUT HER BABY.
WHEN SHE WAS DONE, I KNEW A LOT OF MEN WOULD HAVE TO DIE.
LEANDRO FERNANDEZ '05

PUNISHER #26



THE SLAVERS

PART 2

EVERY NIGHT, TWENTY MEN.
OR I DO NOT MAKE QUOTA.
EVEN WHEN I DO, THEY SAY MONEY IS SHORT, I CHEAT THEM. THEY TAKE COCAINE AND COME AT ME, SAME FOUR MEN. BEAT ME, RAPE ME.
EVERY NIGHT.
IT WAS ONLY THEM?
UH...?
THE FOUR MEN, WERE THEY PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER?
THEY...TALK ABOUT OTHER GIRLS, OTHER PLACES. BUT I NEVER MEET. I AM NOT ALLOWED TO LEAVE APARTMENT ON MY OWN.
ONCE I RUN AWAY, IT IS TOO MUCH FOR ME. I GO BACK TO MY HOME, MY PARENTS. BUT--
MY FATHER IS ASHAMED OF ME. HE SAYS I AM DEAD TO HIM.
MY FATHER SAYS THIS.
THEN I FIND OUT I AM PREGNANT.

YOU WANT TO TAKE A BREAK?
NO--!
I WANT TO TELL.
THE MEN FIND ME. THEY KNOW I GO TO MY VILLAGE, THEY FOLLOW ME.
THEY BEAT ME AND BEAT ME. I AM SO SCARED FOR BABY, I THINK THEY WILL KILL ME. BUT ONE SAYS STOP-- THE OLD MAN IS COMING.
OLD MAN IS FROM AMERICA, COME BACK TO MOLDOVA TO LOOK AT GIRLS. SOME HE WILL TAKE WITH HIM.
WHEN MY FACE IS HEALED THEY BRING ME TO HIM. HE PUTS HIS FINGERS IN ME.
HIS SKIN IS COLD, LIKE ICE-- LIKE--
TAKE A BREAK.
YOU'RE NO GOOD TO ME LIKE THIS.
THE OLD MAN...
THE OLD MAN SOUNDED LIKE A PIP.

LITTLE BLACK BOY.
HEH HEH HEH.
FUNNY LITTLE PICANINNY.
HUH?
THINK WE DON'T SEE YOU PICANINNY? SELLING ON OUR STREETS?
WHAT THE FUCK YOU SAYIN', YO? I DON' EVEN KNOW WHO THE FUCK YOU ARE--
WANT OUR STREETS YOU GOT TO FIGHT FOR THEM. YOU KNOW HOW TO FIGHT?
WHERE WE COME FROM WE FIGHT FOREVER. NAZIS. COMMUNISTS. GO TO BOSNIA TO FIGHT BESIDE THE SERBS.
FUCK...
WHO DO YOU FIGHT, LITTLE PICANINNY?

YOU, BITCH! EVERY DAY A' MY MUTHAFUCKIN' LIFE! LEMME OUTTA THIS FUCKIN' CHAIR, I'M'A WIPE THE FLOOR WIT' YO' TIRED OL' WHITE ASS!
HEH HEH HEH, FUNNY--
WHAAAH!
NO! NO-NO-NO, NO!
MAN, NO, WAIT, DON'T YOU BE DOIN' THIS! PLEASE!
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!
AAAAAAAAH!! AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!! AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!
BLACK. SHIT.

I SUPPOSE YOU DISAPPROVE.
THERE IS AN INVENTION CALLED A GUN, FATHER.
VERY EFFICIENT.
I'VE HEARD OF IT.
BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT. YOU DON'T LIKE ME BEING HERE AT ALL, DO YOU?
I WORK VERY HARD TO PROTECT AND PROVIDE FOR YOU. YOU'VE HAD A HARSH, UNFORGIVING LIFE--I WOULD LIKE YOU TO BE ABLE TO ENJOY THE REST OF IT.
BUT YOU KEEP GETTING INVOLVED IN THESE THINGS, FATHER. YOU KEEP DOING WORK THAT WE HAVE *PEOPLE* FOR...
WHERE ARE YOU GOING WITH THAT?
THE OTHERS.
WHY, EXACTLY?
KILL ONE AS AN EXAMPLE AND LET THE REST GO, LESSON LEARNED. IF YOU KILL THEM ALL, WHO WILL CARRY THE MESSAGE TO THE NEXT GANG WHO COMES ALONG?
YOU ARE AN OLD WOMAN, CRISTU.

I AM NOT.
THAT'S THE MESSAGE. THAT'S THE LESSON.
LEARN IT WELL--
FUCK NO
HE DOESN'T GIVE A SHIT. NOT ABOUT THE POLICE, NOT ABOUT REPERCUSSIONS, NOT ABOUT EVERYTHING WE'VE BUILT HERE.
I'M THINKING ABOUT KILLING MY FATHER, VERA.
NO TRESPASSING
PRIVATE PROPERTY
5
YES, COMPLETELY.

THERE IS THE OLD MAN AND HIS SON.
"HIS SON IS CRISTU. HE IS BAD, BUT HE IS NOT CARING WHAT HE DOES. TO HIM ALL OF IT IS BUSINESS--EVERYTHING, BEATING GIRLS IF THEY MAKE TROUBLE, IT IS JUST TO MAKE BUSINESS RUN RIGHT.
"HE DOES NOT REALLY FEEL.
"I DO NOT KNOW THE OLD MAN'S NAME.
"HE IS LIKE THE DEVIL."
HE LIKES WHAT HE DOES TO ME.
I SEE IT IN HIS FACE. OTHER GIRLS AND ME, THE MEN LINE US UP AND HE--HE SITS IN FRONT OF US AND--
HE PAYS FOR ME AND TWO OTHERS.
HE BRINGS ME TO AMERICA AND I GO BACK TO WORK.

BUT I HAVE BABY FIRST.
MY ANNA.
THEY TAKE HER FROM ME SO I DO NOT RUN.
"THEY LET ME SEE HER ONCE A WEEK.
"THEY ARE NOT *KIND*-- IT IS CRISTU, BECAUSE HE KNOWS I WORK HARDER IF I CAN BE WITH ANNA."
CRISTU RUNS BUSINESS FOR THE OLD MAN. HE MAKES ALL DECISIONS, OLD MAN NOT SO MUCH INVOLVED.
THERE IS HOUSE IN BROOKLYN. CLIENTS ARE BROUGHT THERE FROM DIFFERENT PLACES, LIKE CLUB OF *ANTONY PAVLA*--CAR WINDOWS ARE BLACK, SO NO ONE SEES WHERE HOUSE IS. I AM BROUGHT THERE SAME WAY, FROM APARTMENT WHERE THEY KEEP THE GIRLS.
DO YOU KILL PAVLA? LAST NIGHT?
YES.
THANK YOU.
THANK YOU.

"HOUSE IS RUN BY WOMAN, VERA, BUT I DO NOT THINK SHE LIVES THERE, THEY ARE VERY CAREFUL.
"SHE IS LIKE CRISTU, ABOUT THE BUSINESS. I THINK THEY ARE CLOSE."
BUT SHE IS CRUEL. SHE KNOWS WAYS TO PUNISH GIRLS, NOT JUST BY BEATING.
SHE GETS IN YOUR HEAD.
I KNOW IT IS HER WHO--
HAS IDEA HOW TO PUNISH ME.
LAST WEEK GIRL GETS OUT. SHE GETS MESSAGE BACK TO US, PHONE NUMBER OF SOCIAL WORKER WHO HELPS HER.
I AM SCARED, BUT I MUST TRY. NEXT TIME WITH ANNA I... LET GUARDS HAVE ME, IN TRADE TO BE ALONE WITH BABY.
"I CLIMB OUT WINDOW, RUN FOR MY LIFE. I DO NOT KNOW WHERE I AM, I HAVE ONLY BEEN TO APARTMENT AND HOUSE.
"BUT SOCIAL WORKER COMES."

SHE IS STUPID BITCH.
SHE SAYS ANNA WILL BE SAFE AT PLACE SHE TAKES US--HOTEL ROOM SHE HAS RENTED. SHE HAS BIG PLANS TO BRING DOWN CRISTU, SAYS SHE IS FINDING EVIDENCE TO GIVE POLICE.
SHE IS JUST FULL OF SHIT.
SHE KEEPS RECORDS ON COMPUTER, EVERYTHING SHE DOES. OTHER GIRL--ONE WHO GETS OUT? SHE IS CAUGHT BY VERA, WHEN SHE TRIES TO GIVE NUMBER TO REST OF GIRLS.
VERA GETS NUMBER. FINDS OUT WHO SOCIAL WORKER IS, THEN HACKS COMPUTER.
WE GO TO GET ME CLOTHES, LEAVE ANNA AT HOTEL WITH STUPID BITCH'S BOYFRIEND. WE GO BACK--BOYFRIEND IS BEATEN, ANNA IS GONE.
"YESTERDAY STUPID BITCH GETS E-MAIL.
"WITH ATTACHMENT."

BOYFRIEND OF STUPID BITCH HAS GUN, SO I STEAL. SHE TRIES TO STOP ME, BUT I ALMOST SHOOT HER.
I FIND PAVLA'S NAME IN PHONE BOOK. ADDRESS OF CLUB. I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT I AM DOING, I SEE HIM AND I JUST GO CRAZY...
YEAH.
IT IS FUNNY.
AMERICA IS SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE PROMISED LAND. I AM LITTLE GIRL, MY FRIENDS AND I, WE TALK AND TALK ABOUT IT.
BUT I COME HERE AND IT IS LIKE A NIGHTMARE.

WHAT THE FUCK IS THIS?
YOU'RE THE VICTIMS OF A SERIOUS ASSAULT. YOU NEED TO LOOK THE PART.
OH, NO.
CAPTAIN PRICE, *PLEASE* TELL ME YOU'RE KIDDING...
I AIN'T WEARIN' ANY OF THIS SHIT!
OH YES YOU ARE, OFFICER MILLER.
POLICE
YOU'RE *ORDERIN'* *ME* TO DO IT?
WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO?
...UNBELIEVABLE.
PRICE
YOU WANT SOME HELP WITH THAT?
FUCK OFF, WESTIN. THIS BULLSHIT WAS YOUR IDEA.
MILLER
AN' JUST SO YOU KNOW: I'M FRIENDS WITH SHELLEY MARKS AT THE ONE-FIVE. YOUR LITTLE MAGGOT HAND COMES ANYWHERE NEAR MY TITS AN' I'M GONNA RIP IT OFF AN' SHOVE IT UP YOUR ASS, CAPICE?
POLICE DEPARTMENT
KNOCK IT OFF, WILL YOU?
WE'RE ON.

LAST NIGHT AT APPROXIMATELY ELEVEN-THIRTY P.M., THE VIGILANTE KNOWN AS *THE PUNISHER* WAS IDENTIFIED BY TWO N.Y.P.D. OFFICERS IN THE OCEAN PARKWAY AREA OF *BROOKLYN.*
HE IMMEDIATELY DISARMED AND ASSAULTED THE TWO OFFICERS, *RUSS PARKER AND MARCIE MILLER,* SUBJECTING THEM TO A SUSTAINED AND BRUTAL BEATING. ONLY THEIR TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE SAVED THEM FROM BEING MAIMED OR *EVEN KILLED.*
FUCKING GREAT...
MM?
DISARMED! WE SOUND LIKE A COUPLE OF ASSHOLES!
SO LONG AS HE'S MAKING SHIT UP, COULDN'T HE AT LEAST SAY THE BASTARD JUMPED US?
MILLER
POLICE
THIS *VICIOUS AND UNPROVOKED ATTACK* ILLUSTRATES JUST HOW DANGEROUS *VIGILANTISM*--AND *THIS* INDIVIDUAL IN PARTICULAR--CAN BE IF ALLOWED TO GO UNCHALLENGED. THOSE WHO SUPPORT THE PUNISHER'S ACTIVITIES SHOULD THINK AGAIN: BECAUSE WITH THIS INCIDENT, WE HAVE FINALLY SEEN HIM SHOW HIS *TRUE COLORS.*
THE DEPARTMENT WILL *NOT ALLOW* THIS *HEAVILY ARMED AND VENGEFUL CRIMINAL* TO METE OUT HIS TWISTED VERSION OF JUSTICE IN OUR CITY. THE DAYS OF *IGNORING* THE PUNISHER, IN THE VAIN HOPE THAT HE WILL GO AWAY, ARE *OVER.*

HE IS NOT AN EMBARRASSING PROBLEM, NEVER TO BE SPOKEN OF. HE IS A KILLER, AND HE WILL BE HUNTED DOWN AND STOPPED.
NICE.
THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT. IF YOU HADN'T GOTTEN SO CLOSE TO THE FUCK HE WOULDNA GOT YOUR GUN OFF YOU.
I SEEM TO RECALL HE DID THE SAME TO YOU...
ONLY 'CAUSE I WAS STUCK UNDER YOUR HUNDRED AND SEVENTY POUND ASS.
WELL, LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE. A GOOD TWO-THIRDS OF THAT IS COCK.
POLICE DEPARTMENT
...A MATTER OF THE UTMOST SERIOUSNESS--
HA!!
...FUCK.

THE FIRST THING I DID WAS STASH THE GIRL AT A MOTEL. THEN I WENT OVER TO PAVLA'S CLUB, KILLED ANYONE WHO TRIED TO PULL A PIECE, AND FOUND THE SHITHEEL THEY HAD STANDING IN FOR PAVLA.
I SHOT HOLES IN HIS LEGS UNTIL HE TOLD ME WHERE TO FIND THE HOUSE VIORICA HAD TALKED ABOUT. THAT WAS WHERE THINGS GOT KIND OF TRICKY.
A FIREFIGHT IN A BROTHEL WOULD LEAVE AS MANY HOOKERS DEAD AS CRISTU'S FUCKS. UNDERCOVER WOULDN'T WORK; I LOOK LIKE TROUBLE ANY WAY YOU CUT IT. I FOUND THAT OUT THE HARD WAY.
BUT THE HOUSE WAS THE NEXT LINK IN THE CHAIN. IF I WANTED CRISTU AND HIS FATHER, I NEEDED TO GET IN THERE.
TRICKY.

A CLOSER LOOK AND I FORGOT ABOUT A COVERT ENTRY. THE WINDOWS WERE ALARMED, THE DOORS WERE TRIPLE-BOLTED.
GO IN HARD AND THEY'D HAVE ALL THE TIME THEY NEEDED --TO WIPE THE FILES, TO GET THEIR PEOPLE OUT THE BACK.
INSPIRATION WAS A WHILE IN COMING.
I GAVE THEM HALF AN HOUR.
THAT WAS JUST ABOUT THE WORST FUCK OF MY LIFE...
YOU'RE KIDDING!
AFTER EVERYTHING YOU HEAR ABOUT THIS PLACE... SHIT, MAN, THE GIRL THEY GAVE ME WAS FUCKING PATHETIC...
MINE WAS GREAT. UH, WHAT HAPPENS NOW? DO YOU TAKE US BACK TO WHERE WE MET YOU?
YEAH.

THEY COULDN'T SEE SHIT, SO I WAS FREE TO TAKE THEM WHERE I WANTED.
NOT THAT THEY PAID MUCH ATTENTION TO BEGIN WITH.
...THIS TERRIBLE HAND JOB THAT WENT ON FOREVER, AND THEN WHEN I'M FUCKING HER SHE'S COVERING HER TITS LIKE SHE'S TERRIFIED... I MEAN WHY DOES SHE EVEN DO IT, YOU KNOW?
ALTHOUGH, ACTUALLY, I THINK I CAN PROBABLY GUESS THE ANSWER TO THAT ONE...
I THINK YOU CAN TOO.
HUH?
OH, WE'RE HERE.
WHERE THE--?
OH, JESUS SHIT!!

WHAT--WHAT--OH FUCK, DON'T KILL US! PLEASE DON'T KILL US!
W-W-WE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING--!
FUCKING A GIRL WHO DOESN'T WANT IT.
WHAT'S THAT CALLED?
THAT WAS HIM!
NO, NO, IT WASN'T LIKE THAT! JESUS CHRIST, NO! THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING!
WE'RE GOING BACK.
ON THE WAY YOU'LL TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU SAW INSIDE THE HOUSE. AT THE DOOR YOU'LL SAY YOU LEFT YOUR WALLET. YOUR DRIVER SAID IT WAS OKAY TO COME BACK.
TH... THEN WHAT?
THEN THE FUCK AT THE DOOR DIES QUIET, AND I GO IN.
OR WOULD HAVE DONE.
1951
POLICE
PURE BAD LUCK.
MUST HAVE SEEN ME WITH THE GUN WHEN THEY CAME ACROSS THE BRIDGE, THEN CIRCLED BACK TO CHECK.

I'D HEARD THEM ON THE RADIO THAT AFTERNOON, DECLARING OPEN SEASON. STILL REMEMBER WONDERING ABOUT THE TIMING-- THE DAY RIGHT AFTER VIORICA APPEARED.
THE COPS I HIT BEFORE WERE BARELY SCRATCHED. SOMEONE HAD AN ANGLE THEY WERE WORKING, THAT WAS OBVIOUS.
HALT!!
HALT, GODDAMMIT!
SHIT--
WAAAH, FUCK, NO--!
UNNHH!!

LOOKS LIKE IT'S TIME FOR THE SUSTAINED AND BRUTAL BEATING.
UNLESS MAYBE SOMEONE'S FULL OF SHIT.
JESUS CHRIST.

I WAS FUCKED.
1961
1951
1974
1927
NYPD
ONCE CRISTU'S OUTFIT HEARD WHO TRIED TO HIT THEM, THE HOUSE WOULD BE ABANDONED. THEY'D HAVE THE GIRLS OUT OF THERE INSIDE AN HOUR.
A WEEK OR TWO 'TIL THINGS CALMED DOWN--THEN THEY'D START UP SOMEWHERE ELSE.
FOX NEWS
CNN
I HAD A LONG WALK HOME AND MY ONLY LEAD WAS A DEAD END. WHAT I NEEDED WAS A NEW WAY IN.
AND I GOT ONE.
THINKING BACK, EVEN I WAS SURPRISED BY WHERE IT CAME FROM.
LEANDRO FERNANDEZ '05

PUNISHER #27

THE SLAVERS

PART 3

PLEASE, I SWEAR TO FUCKIN' GOD--
STICK TO THE POINT.
NOBODY KNOWS 'EM, MAN! THEY DON'T USE OUTSIDERS, IT'S ALWAYS THEIR OWN PEOPLE! THERE'S JUST NO FUCKIN' WAY TO GET IN WITH 'EM!
WHAT ABOUT THE HOUSES?
THERE'S LIKE ONE HOUSE AN' ONE CLUB WHERE THEY PICK YOU UP, AN' IF YOU GOTTA ASK WHERE YOU AIN'T NEVER GONNA KNOW!
IT'S BUSINESSMEN, IT'S GUYS FROM OVERSEAS WHO HEAR ABOUT IT--WORDA MOUTH, OR ONLINE OR SOME SHIT! YOU'RE BARKIN' UP THE WRONG FUCKIN' TREE WITH ME, MAN!
THEY USE THEIR OWN GIRLS TOO, THEY BRING 'EM IN FROM I DUNNO WHERE... THEY NEVER USE LOCAL TALENT, THEY NEVER PUT GIRLS ONNA STREET, THEY NEVER COME TO GUYS LIKE ME...
THERE EVER ANY GIRLS WHO QUIT ON THEM? MAYBE COME TO YOU FOR WORK?
WOULDN'T KNOW. WOULDN'T ASK.
I DON'T WANNA KNOW SHIT ABOUT THEM STONE-COLD EURO MOTHERFUCKERS, MAN...
YOU SURE?
HNNHH!!
DON'T THINK ANYONE QUIT ON 'EM, EVER--I MEAN THEY ARE FUCKIN' BADASSES--!
JESUS I CAN'T FUCKIN' BREATHE
THAT WAS WHEN I CAME UP WITH PLAN B.

...WEEK NOW SINCE THE PUNISHER'S SECOND BRUTAL ASSAULT ON AN N.Y.P.D. OFFICER, WHEN THE VIGILANTE--REAL NAME FRANK CASTLE--AMBUSHED PATROLMAN ERNEST MOSSTOW ON SUBWAY TRACKS NEAR JAMAICA BAY IN QUEENS...
A POLICE SPOKESMAN REITERATED THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY OF ZERO-TOLERANCE ON VIGILANTISM, SAYING, "THIS GUY HAS HURT ONE OF OUR OWN. HE'S HURT A POLICE OFFICER. AND THAT'S SOMETHING WE DON'T TAKE LYING DOWN."
CASTLE'S RECENT ATTACKS ON COPS FOLLOW HIS RAMPAGE OF KILLING LAST SUMMER, WHEN IN ONE NIGHT HE MURDERED FIFTY-NINE PEOPLE--HIS VIOLENT REACTION TO MOBSTER NICOLAS CAVELLA'S DESECRATION OF HIS FAMILY'S GRAVE.
CAVELLA'S BODY WAS FOUND NOT LONG AFTER THE INCIDENT. POLICE HAVE POINTED TO THE NIGHT OF SLAUGHTER AS EVIDENCE OF THE PUNISHER'S ESCALATING MENTAL DISINTEGRATION; HIS TURNING ON THE N.Y.P.D. BEING ONE MORE STEP ON HIS PATH TO COMPLETE BREAKDOWN...
EVIDENCE OF SANITY, IT SOUNDS LIKE TO ME.
SOMEONE DUG UP THE GRAVE OF YOUR MOTHER? I WOULD SLAUGHTER THOUSANDS.
THIS WILL BE AN INTERESTING MAN TO KILL...
WHICH IS WHY WE ARE NOT GOING ANYWHERE NEAR HIM.
NO?

HE IS COMING AT US, CRISTU. BECAUSE OF HIM WE RELOCATE THE HOUSE, LOSE MUCH INCOME...
FATHER, EVERYONE WHO TRIES TO FIGHT THIS MAN DIES.
LET THE POLICE DEAL WITH HIM. THAT IS WHAT WE PAID FOR: THE WHOLE POINT IS THAT THERE IS NO RISK TO US AT ALL.
IN THE MEANTIME WE COMPLETE THE RELOCATION, BRING IN THE NEW GIRLS. WE CONTINUE DOING BUSINESS.
AAAHH...!
BUSINESS, BUSINESS, BUSINESS. THAT IS YOUR BATTLE-CRY NOW, CRISTU.
MAYBE I WILL DEAL WITH THE PUNISHER. MAYBE I GIVE HIM A FIGHT, IF NO ONE ELSE HAS THE GUTS FOR IT.
...WELL, WHY NOT?
I PAY FOR A BEAUTIFUL APARTMENT, BUT YOU STAY IN THE SAME SQUALID LITTLE HOLE YOU'VE HAD SINCE WE CAME HERE. I WANT COMMERCE--YOU INSIST ON WAR.
IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD, WE CAN RELY ON YOU TO DO WHATEVER THE HELL YOU LIKE.
VERA?
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.
DO IT.

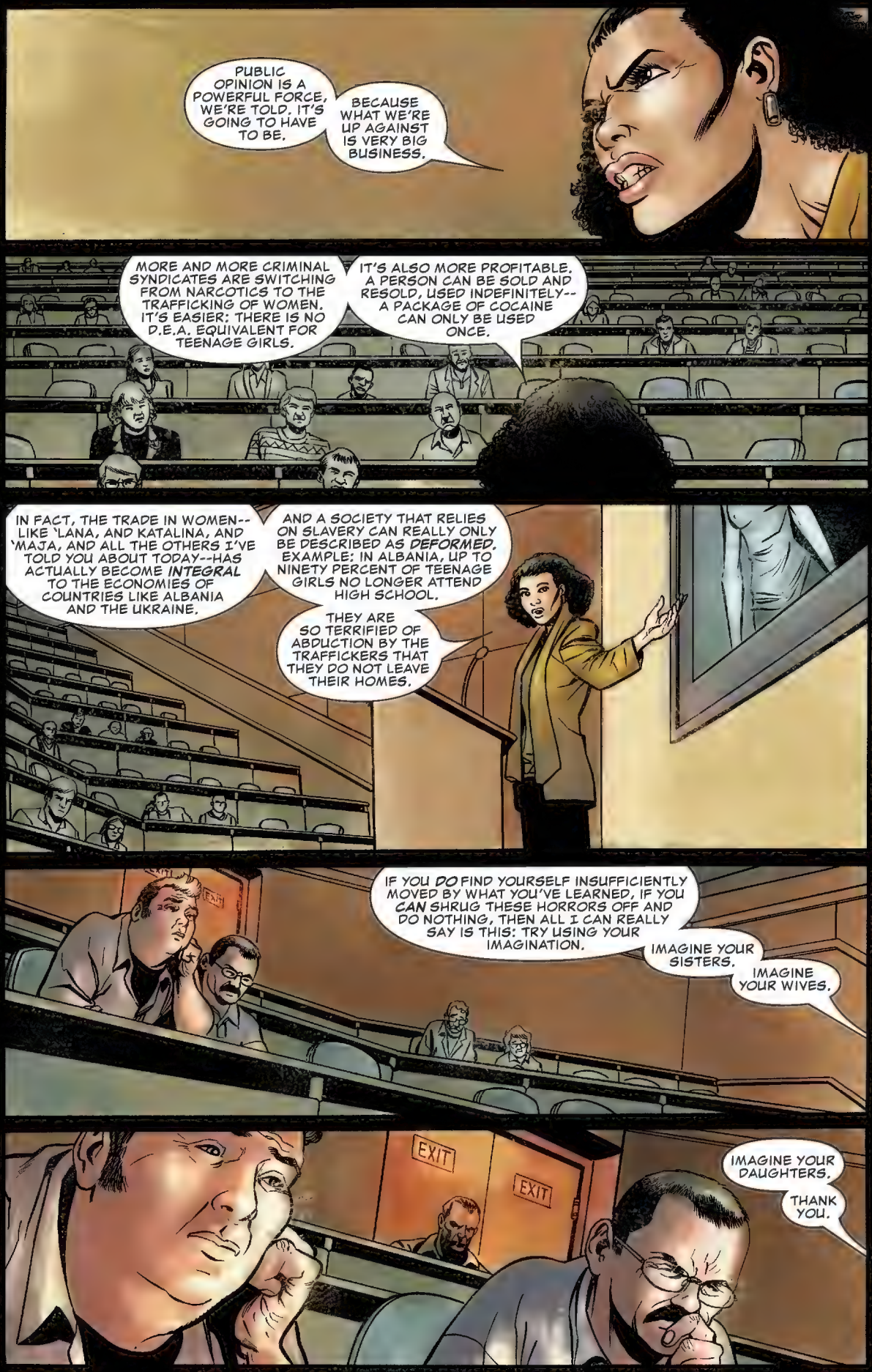
ERNIE MOSSTOW?
UH?
DESK SERGEANT SAID WE'D FIND YOU HERE. I'M MARCIE MILLER, HE'S RUSS PARKER.
WE THINK WE MIGHT ALL HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON.
YOU TWO HAD THE PRESS CONFERENCE...
AND, UH...AIN'T YOU...?
YES.
BUY YOU A BEER, ERNIE?
WAIT A MINUTE--
THREE BUDS.
YOU HAD A PRESS CONFERENCE TOO, DIDN'T YOU? OURS WAS PRETTY MUCH ALL LIES, WE WONDERED IF YOURS MIGHT BE THE SAME.
WHAT?
THE PUNISHER DIDN'T DO SHIT TO US. I MEAN YEAH, HE HAD THE DROP ON US, BUT HE DIDN'T DO ANY OF THE STUFF THEY SAID HE DID.
SO WHAT, YOU'RE OUT TO CLEAR HIS FUCKIN' NAME...?
WE DECIDED WE DON'T LIKE BEING USED.
HOW ABOUT YOU?

OH, IT WAS ALL GARBAGE...
Toilettes
I FELL OFF THE FENCE AND BUST MY HEAD OPEN ON THE RAILS. HE SAID SOMETHIN' ABOUT... SOMEONE BEIN' FULL OF SHIT OR SOMETHIN', I DUNNO.
THEN HE TOOK OFF.
SO...
SO, NEXT MORNING I GET A CALL FROM STU WESTIN, THIS--
WE KNOW HIM.
HE'S PUTTING TOGETHER THIS PRESS THING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED, WHICH I DON'T UNDERSTAND--I MEAN WHO THE HELL GIVES A FUCK, RIGHT? BUT I GO OVER THERE AND HE'S GOT THIS WHOLE STORY WORKED OUT FOR ME TO TELL THE MEDIA: THE PUNISHER KICKED THE SHIT OUTTA ME, HE'DA KILLED ME IF MY PARTNER DIDN'T SHOW UP...
AND HE GIVES ME A BOX OF BAND-AIDS AND MY FIFTEEN MINUTES STARTS THERE.
YOU JUST WENT ALONG WITH IT?
DIDN'T YOU?
...FUCK.
I GOT A LITTLE PROBLEM. I OWE SOME PEOPLE SOME MONEY.
AND... WESTIN KNOWS ALL ABOUT IT.
ERNIE, IF WE--
NOT A CHANCE IN HELL.
I BEEN WANTING TO TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT THIS, BUT YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT THIS IS AS FAR AS IT GOES.

TOM PRICE
CAPTAIN
WELL, DETECTIVE WESTIN, YOUR LITTLE INITIATIVE SEEMS TO HAVE LANDED A NOT INCONSIDERABLE SHIPMENT OF DARK BLACK SHIT ON MY DESK...
TECHNICALLY, CAPTAIN, IT'S ACTUALLY YOUR--
THIS WOULD BE A GOOD TIME FOR YOU TO NOT BE A PRICK.
THE PUNISHER HAS MORE SUPPORT--OKAY, PEOPLE WHO THINK GOING AFTER HIM IS A MASSIVE WASTE OF RESOURCES--IN THE DEPARTMENT THAN EVEN I KNEW. AND THEY'RE ALL FEELING THE PRESSURE, NOW THAT THE PRESS ARE INVOLVED.
ALL OF A SUDDEN, I'M IN A POSITION WHERE I NEED RESULTS...
THAT'S KIND OF GOING TO BE UP TO YOUR OFFICERS, ISN'T IT?
OH, FUCKING GREAT--!
CAPTAIN, YOU CAN'T EXPECT RESULTS RIGHT AWAY. WE'RE HURTING THE BASTARD; WHAT WE HAVE TO DO NOW IS WAIT FOR IT TO BEAR FRUIT.
AND THERE ARE LOTS OF OUR GUYS WHO HATE THE PUNISHER, WHO UNDERSTAND THAT WHAT YOU'RE DOING HERE IS ALL ABOUT THEIR AUTHORITY... LOOK, GIMME A SECOND, WILL YOU?
YEAH? HEY.
GO ON...
OKAY, THANKS, ERNIE. APPRECIATE THE HEADS-UP.
SEE YOU.

VIORICA.
DIDN'T WANT TO GO NEAR HER AGAIN, EXCEPT TO TELL HER IT WAS FINISHED.
THE SOCIAL WORKER YOU TALKED ABOUT...
STUPID BITCH WHO KILLS MY BABY.
YOU SAID SHE WAS GATHERING EVIDENCE AGAINST CRISTU AND THE OLD MAN.
I NEED TO TALK TO HER. I CAN'T GO ANY FURTHER 'TIL I DO.
NAME IS JEN COOKE.
NUMBER IS TWO-ONE-TWO... SOMETHING.
JEN COOKE?
AVERAGE HEIGHT, LONG BLACK HAIR? NEVER SHUTS UP?
STUPID BITCH.
I KNOW HER.
I MUST STAY HERE HOW MUCH LONGER?
I CAN'T STOP YOU LEAVING. BUT I DON'T ADVISE IT.
FOOD AND CLEAN CLOTHES IN THE BAG.

PLEASE TRY TO REMEMBER THAT THERE ARE REAL PEOPLE BEHIND THESE WORDS AND IMAGES.
REAL WOMEN.
REAL CHILDREN.
IT'S SO EASY FOR US TO SIDELINE TRAGEDY, WHEN WE DON'T HAVE TO EXPERIENCE IT OURSELVES.
TELEVISION, NEWSPAPERS, LECTURES LIKE THIS ONE: THEY SHOCK AND SADDEN US, BUT RARELY DO WE INTERNALIZE THE INFORMATION TO THE POINT THAT WE MIGHT ACT.
BUT WHAT I'VE TOLD YOU TODAY IS TRUE.
THESE WOMEN ARE NOT PROSTITUTES BY CHOICE. THEY HAVE BEEN *FORCED*, AND BECAUSE THEY'VE BEEN TRAFFICKED INTO THE U.S. *ILLEGALLY*, THERE IS PRECIOUS LITTLE THE POLICE CAN OR WILL DO FOR THEM--EXCEPT DEPORT THEM, IN MANY CASES TO THEIR DEATHS.
SO LIKE IT OR NOT, THAT JUST LEAVES US.
EXIT
EXIT


PUBLIC OPINION IS A POWERFUL FORCE, WE'RE TOLD. IT'S GOING TO HAVE TO BE.
BECAUSE WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST IS VERY BIG BUSINESS.
MORE AND MORE CRIMINAL SYNDICATES ARE SWITCHING FROM NARCOTICS TO THE TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN. IT'S EASIER: THERE IS NO D.E.A. EQUIVALENT FOR TEENAGE GIRLS.
IT'S ALSO MORE PROFITABLE. A PERSON CAN BE SOLD AND RESOLD, USED INDEFINITELY--A PACKAGE OF COCAINE CAN ONLY BE USED ONCE.
IN FACT, THE TRADE IN WOMEN--LIKE 'LANA, AND KATALINA, AND 'MAJA, AND ALL THE OTHERS I'VE TOLD YOU ABOUT TODAY--HAS ACTUALLY BECOME *INTEGRAL* TO THE ECONOMIES OF COUNTRIES LIKE ALBANIA AND THE UKRAINE.
AND A SOCIETY THAT RELIES ON SLAVERY CAN REALLY ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS *DEFORMED*. EXAMPLE: IN ALBANIA, UP TO NINETY PERCENT OF TEENAGE GIRLS NO LONGER ATTEND HIGH SCHOOL.
THEY ARE SO TERRIFIED OF ABDUCTION BY THE TRAFFICKERS THAT THEY DO NOT LEAVE THEIR HOMES.
EXIT
IF YOU *DO* FIND YOURSELF INSUFFICIENTLY MOVED BY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED, IF YOU *CAN* SHRUG THESE HORRORS OFF AND DO NOTHING, THEN ALL I CAN REALLY SAY IS THIS: TRY USING YOUR IMAGINATION.
IMAGINE YOUR SISTERS.
IMAGINE YOUR WIVES.
EXIT
EXIT
IMAGINE YOUR DAUGHTERS.
THANK YOU.

JUDY, IF YOU COULD GET THIS ON THE COVER, EVEN JUST A LINE...
YEAH, I, I DON'T REALLY KNOW IF THERE'D BE TIME. NEW EDITOR'S KIND OF A HARDASS ABOUT THAT.
BUT IT'S SO IMPORTANT...!
I'LL TRY, OKAY? I'LL DO MY BEST.
I'VE REALLY GOT TO GO, JEN. SEE YOU!
JEN COOKE.
YEAH...?
OH JESUS GOD.
PLEASE DON'T KILL ME.

WHY, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
I KNOW WHAT IT IS! IT'S THE THING IN THE TUNNELS, THE SUBWAY TUNNELS!
I SAW TOO MUCH AND NOW YOU'VE COME TO KILL ME--!
I KNOW YOU'RE THE PUNISHER--
EVERYONE KNOWS I'M THE PUNISHER.
I HAVEN'T SAID A WORD, I NEVER WENT TO THE COPS, I SWEAR--
DON'T BE STUPID.
WELL-- THEN--
SOMETHING I THOUGHT YOU COULD HELP ME WITH.
WHAT?
IT HAS TO DO WITH YOUR LECTURE.
COMING?

WHAT ARE WE DOING, MARCIE?
I MEAN ARE WE I.A. NOW? IS THAT IT?
WELL, WE BOTH SAID WE WANTED TO KNOW...
I JUST CAN'T FIGURE WHAT A PRICK LIKE WESTIN'S DOIN' FUCKIN' WITH THE PUNISHER, BUT I KNOW IT'S NOT FOR THE GOOD OF THE DEPARTMENT...
HEY! PARKER!
I HEARD YOU FOUND YOUR BOYFRIEND SCRUBBIN' A COUPLA TURDS INNA TUB LAST NIGHT. THAT HIS TURN TO GIVE THE KIDS THEIR BATH?
GOOD ONE.
SPEAKIN' OF SHIT, YOU EVER HEAR ABOUT PETERS' FIRST ARREST?
I MEAN I SAY ARREST, BUT IT'S NOT LIKE ANYONE ACTUALLY GOT BUSTED. PETERS HAD THE CUFFS KINDA HALF-ON THIS GUY, AN' HE TURNED AROUND AN' PUNCHED HIS FUCKIN' TEETH OUT--USED THE CUFFS LIKE KNUCKLEDUSTERS, YOU KNOW?
PETERS COMES ROUND AN' HE'S ALL ALONE, AN' HE SEES HIS BADGE IS TORN OFF HIS SHIRT. IT'S LYIN' THERE IN FRONTA HIM, AN' THE GUY'S TAKEN THIS GIANT, KING-SIZE FUCKIN' DUMP ON IT...

HEY, FUCK YOU, MILLER! THAT LITTLE COCKSUCKER SHIT ON ALL OUR BADGES, HE SHIT ONNA WHOLE FUCKIN' N.Y.P.D!
NO, PETERS, HE SHIT ON YOUR BADGE. HE LOOKED AT YOU AN' HE SAW A FUCKIN' TOILET.
OH, GOD, YOU'RE BORING, PETERS.
YOUR HOMOPHOBIA IS BORING.
FUCKIN' FAGGOT!
UUNNHH
FUNNY THIS SHOULD HAPPEN NOW, DON'T YOU THINK?
HUH?

FUCKIN'... FAGGOTS...
SEVEN ON TWO... SEVEN ON FUCKIN' TWO...
YOU'RE THE FUCKIN' FAGGOTS...!
POLICE DEPARTMENT
NEW YORK
I LOVE YOU, MARCIE.
BUT WILL YOU PLEASE JUST SHUT THE FUCK UP?
CITY OF

VIORICA MUST HATE ME.
YES.
YOU KNOW THE POLICE WON'T INVESTIGATE HER DAUGHTER'S MURDER?
A PHOTOGRAPH OF A DEAD BABY ISN'T A DEAD BABY. THERE'S NO CRIME.
THERE'LL BE NO JUSTICE FOR THE CHILD THAT MY STUPIDITY GOT KILLED.
SHE SAID YOU'RE TRYING--
I KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE.
I'M TRYING TO TALK MYSELF INTO GIVING YOU WHAT YOU WANT.
BUT IT GOES AGAINST EVERYTHING I BELIEVE IN, SO BEAR WITH ME, WILL YOU?

THE LECTURE YOU HEARD TODAY? I HAD TO SANITIZE IT.
I DIDN'T WANT TO SCARE PEOPLE OFF, MAKE IT SO HORRIFIC THAT THEY WOULDN'T EVEN WANT TO THINK ABOUT THE ISSUES.
DIDN'T WANT TO BE POLITICALLY INCORRECT.
I LEFT OUT THE GIRLS WHO ARE TRAFFICKED THROUGH SAUDI TO IRAQ, SET UP AS WHORES FOR AMERICAN AND BRITISH SOLDIERS.
I LEFT OUT THE GUY IN RUMANIA, WHOSE DAUGHTER AGREED TO TESTIFY TO THE POLICE ABOUT HER ABDUCTION.
AND HE CAME HOME AND FOUND HIS OTHER DAUGHTER TORN TO BITS AND SPLATTERED ALL OVER THE APARTMENT.
YOU SEE, I'VE BEEN LOOKING INTO THIS *SHIT* FOR TWO YEARS NOW, AND I'VE STARTED TO WONDER JUST WHAT THE HELL IT IS I THINK I'M DOING. BECAUSE THE HORROR, THE *UNSPEAKABLE FUCKING CRUELTY* JUST KEEPS HAPPENING--AND NOTHING GETS DONE ABOUT IT, THEY JUST KEEP ON GETTING AWAY WITH IT...
AND IT MAKES ME WANT TO NOT *BE* A SOCIAL WORKER ANYMORE, IT MAKES ME WANT TO *BURN THE WORLD CLEAN* LIKE AN *ANGEL* WITH A *FIERY SWORD...!*
BUT THERE ARE NO ANGELS, ARE THERE?
NO.

CAN YOU AT LEAST TRY--
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO.
DON'T KID YOURSELF ABOUT ANY OF THIS. I'M HITTING THIS ONE OUTFIT, THAT'S ALL.
IT WON'T STOP THE TRADE IN WOMEN. WON'T MAKE LIFE ANY BETTER FOR THE VICTIMS.
NO. CAN YOU GO NOW, PLEASE?
WHY...
WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST BREAK IN AND TAKE THE FILE?
DIDN'T KNOW WHERE YOU KEPT IT.
SOMETIMES IT'S EASIER TO ASK.

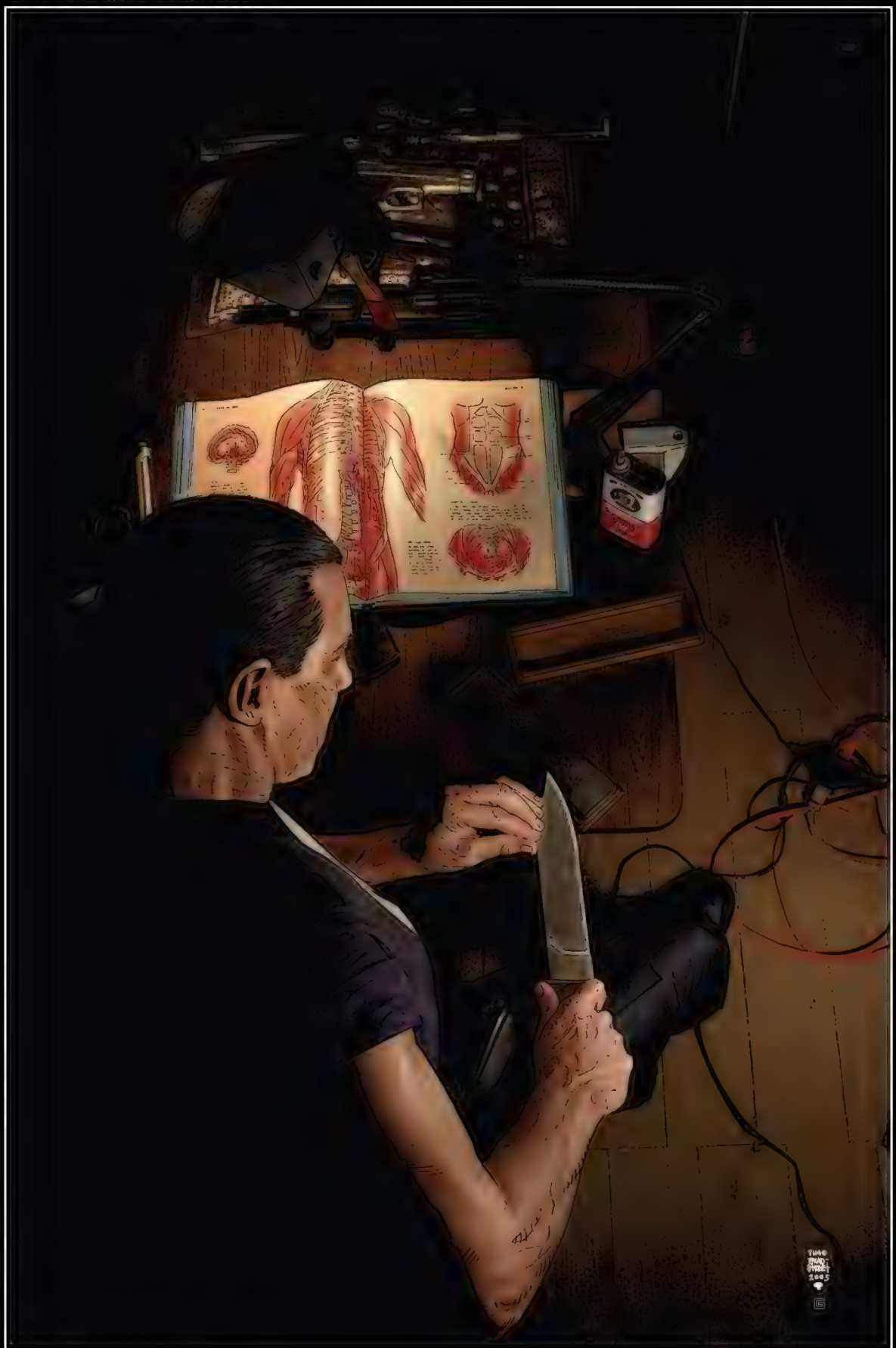
TURNED OUT SHE'D DONE A PRETTY THOROUGH JOB.
IT WAS TOO SOON FOR HER TO KNOW THE LOCATION OF THE NEW HOUSE, BUT SHE'D HEARD ABOUT ANOTHER ONE: A PLACE UPSTATE, WHERE V.I.P. CLIENTS COULD GO FOR PRIVATE PARTIES.
ONE OF THE GIRLS SHE'D GOTTEN OUT HAD BEEN THERE-- SEEN A ROAD SIGN WHEN THE DRIVER OF THE VAN FORGOT TO LOCK THE BLACKED-OUT WINDOW.
SO THAT WAS SOMETHING WORTH EXPLORING.
IT WAS WHEN SHE TRIED TO I.D. THE BOSSES THAT SHE HIT A WALL. *CRISTU*, *VERA* AND *THE OLD MAN*: NOT MUCH TO GO ON. NOTHING IN IMMIGRATION, NOT EVEN SOCIAL SECURITY.
SHE TRIED ANOTHER ANGLE, TOOK A LOOK AT WHERE THE GIRLS HAD COME FROM. NEARLY ALL OF THEM HAD HORROR STORIES FROM THE BALKAN CONFLICTS OF THE NINETIES.
EVENTUALLY SHE TURNED UP A SERB MILITIA OUTFIT, MADE UP OF FOREIGN FIGHTERS COME TO JOIN THE WAR AGAINST THE MUSLIMS. RUN BY ROMANIANS, *TIBERIU AND CRISTU BULAT*: FATHER AND SON.
IN THE SPACE OF TWO YEARS, THEY'D TAKEN OUT A DOZEN VILLAGES.
FACE OF GENOCIDE

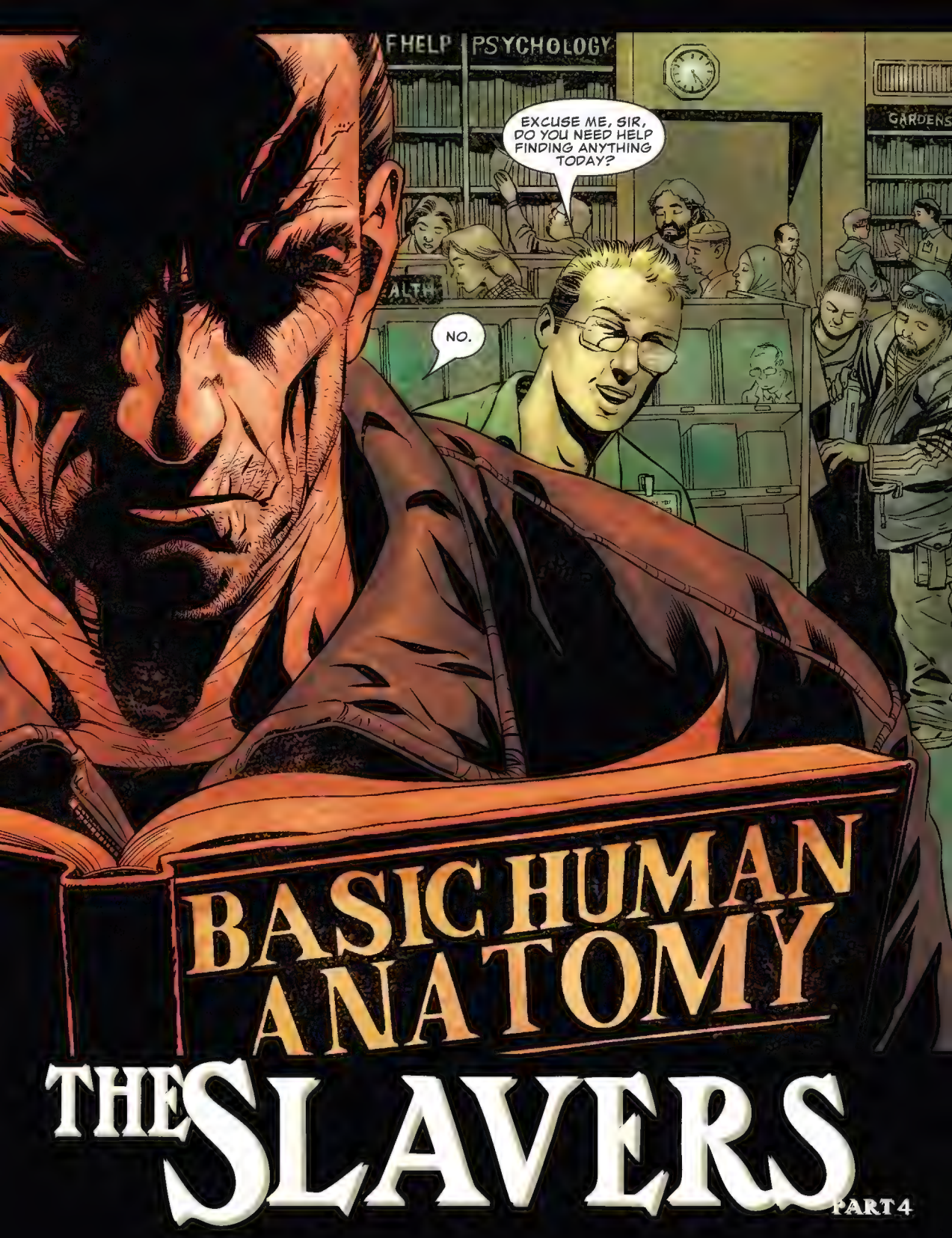
THE LAST FOUR PLACES THAT THEY HIT WERE DIFFERENT.
SAME STREETS OF CORPSES AS BEFORE, A TOTAL OF OVER EIGHTEEN HUNDRED. BUT MEN, KIDS AND OLDER WOMEN ONLY IN THE LAST FOUR.
ALL THE GIRLS WERE GONE.
SOMEONE MUST HAVE HAD A BRAINWAVE. CRISTU, I GUESSED, FROM WHAT VIORICA HAD TOLD ME.
MORE PROFIT IN SLAVERY THAN MASSACRE. YOU ALREADY RUN A DEATH SQUAD: ALL THE RECRUITS YOU'LL NEED WHEN YOU JOIN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AND WHEN NATO TAKES A HAND AND IT ISN'T QUITE SO EASY DOING BUSINESS--
WHAT ELSE DO YOU DO BUT MOVE OUT WEST?

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, THE BADLANDS OF EASTERN EUROPE HAVE BEEN AT WAR FOREVER.
THEY GIVE THE WORLD ITS HARDEST SOLDIERS. ALWAYS HAVE.
MEN WHO PLAY SOCCER WITH SEVERED HEADS IN KINDERGARTEN YARDS; WHO WIRE THEIR CAPTIVES WITH EXPLOSIVES, DRUG THEM, THEN SEND THEM STAGGERING BACK TO UNSUSPECTING FAMILIES.
THE THINGS I'D HAVE TO DO TO BREAK THOSE MEN--TO MAKE THEM TALK--
WOULD BE EXTREME.

OOAAAAAKK
OOAAGG
OH--
OH JESUS--
WHAT KIND OF FUCKING PERSON AM I?
WHAT IN THE NAME OF GOD HAVE I DONE...?

PUNISHER #28




F HELP
PSYCHOLOGY
GARDENS
ALTH
EXCUSE ME, SIR, DO YOU NEED HELP FINDING ANYTHING TODAY?
NO.
BASIC HUMAN ANATOMY
THE SLAVERS
PART 4

HOLY BIBLE
CEYLON TEA
PEPPERMINT TEA

MUTHAFUCKA!!
AAAAH--!
AAAAH--
FUCK--
AAAAAAH...!
I KILLED SOMEONE LIKE YOU JUST THE OTHER DAY.
MM?

YOU KILL MY CUZ, YOU OL' FUCK! HIM AN' SIXA HIS HOMIES, YOU FUCKIN' TAKE 'EM ALL OUT!
SOMEONE TOLD YOU WHERE TO FIND ME, GOLLIWOG.
FUCK YOU!
YES, I THINK SO.
FUCK YOU!
I THINK SO...
I AIN'T GOT SHIT TO SAY TO YOU, FOOL! YOU CAN SUCK MY MUTHAFUCKIN' DICK!
UUUHH...
DAMN...!

NOFUCKWAIT--
I THINK SO.
MM?

OOOHH... JESUS...!
I AM GONNA BE PISSIN' BLOOD FOR A WEEK...
WELL, THAT'S HOW LONG WE'VE GOT OFF, SO IT SHOULD ENLIVEN YOUR VACATION TIME.
MUST BE SOME KIND OF RECORD. THE LONGEST FLIGHT OF STAIRS TWO PEOPLE HAVE FALLEN DOWN IN HISTORY.
I TOLD YOU, YOU DO NOT EVEN WANNA THINK ABOUT GOIN' TO I.A....
NOT WITH THIS, MAYBE.
YOU REALLY THINK THIS HAD SOMETHIN' TO DO WITH WESTIN?
COME ON, MARCIE, THEY WERE ALL OVER US LIKE A PACK OF DOGS. SINCE WHEN IS PETERS THAT POPULAR, FOR GOD'S SAKE?
IT WAS A SETUP. WE STIRRED THINGS UP BY TALKING TO ERNIE MOSTOW, AND WESTIN MADE SURE WE GOT FUCKED FOR IT.
I DUNNO.
WHAT... WHAT'RE YOU THINKIN'...?
FUCK BACK.

WARRENSBURG 12, NORTH CREEK 17.
THAT WAS THE SIGN COOKE'S EYEWITNESS SAW, BEHIND HER ON THE ROAD.
COOKE ASKED HER HOW LONG THEY'D BEEN GOING, SHE SAID THREE QUARTERS OF AN HOUR. AT A STEADY FIFTY-FIVE, I FIGURED THAT MEANT INDIAN LAKE.
AFTER THAT, ALL I HAD TO GO ON WAS A HOUSE ON THE WATER, AND THE SUN SETTING ON THE HILLS BEYOND THE FAR SHORE.
BUT I KNEW THERE'D BE A TOWN, OR MAYBE JUST A STORE OR TWO. PEOPLE WHO'D REMEMBER GUYS WITH FOREIGN ACCENTS.
PROBLEM WAS THE SAME AS LAST TIME: A FIREFIGHT IN A BROTHEL, INNOCENTS MIXED UP WITH SCUM.
I'D GIVEN IT QUITE A BIT OF THOUGHT.

VERA?
CRISTU...
YOUR FATHER JUST CALLED TO SAY HE WAS ALL RIGHT.
DID HE... SAY ANYTHING ABOUT...?
NO. ALL HE SAID WAS THAT HE HAD TO LEAVE HIS HOME THIS MORNING, AND THAT I SHOULD LET YOU KNOW HE WAS SAFE.
HE KNOWS.
HAVE YOU ENOUGH MEN WITH YOU?
THERE ARE THE THREE HERE AT THE HOUSE. I'LL CALL THE BOYS DOWN IN WARRENSBURG, THEY CAN BE HERE IN NO TIME AT ALL.
CRISTU...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, VERA. IT WAS PROBABLY ALWAYS GOING TO BE LIKE THIS, I THINK.
FUCK.

LOOKED LIKE BUSINESS WAS SUSPENDED FOR THE NIGHT.
BY THAT POINT I'D BEEN WATCHING FOR AN HOUR. THESE GUYS, PLUS CRISTU, PLUS THE OTHER THREE I'D SEEN MADE TEN.
NO GIRLS, BUT I FIGURED THEY WERE KEPT INSIDE.
WERE THEY EXPECTING ME, WITH ALL THAT FIREPOWER?
I'D FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH.
AT SUPPER.

CRISTU! CRISTU!
CRISTU--
NOT HUNGRY?
A... ALLERGIES...

NNNRRRR

FIGURED I'D CROSS THIS BRIDGE WHEN I CAME TO IT.
BUT INSPIRATION WASN'T COMING.

ONCE THE POLICE WERE THROUGH WITH THEM, THE GIRLS WOULD BE SENT HOME.
TO BE PICKED UP BY THE TRAFFICKERS AGAIN. PUT BACK TO WORK, OR WORSE.
IT WAS ONE OF THOSE MOMENTS WHERE I CAME UP AGAINST MY LINE.
HELLO...?
IT'S ME.
WH-WH--?
THERE ARE FOUR WOMEN HERE WHO NEED HELP. GET A PEN, BE READY TO WRITE DOWN DIRECTIONS.
W-WAIT A MINUTE, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHAT DID YOU DO AFTER I GAVE YOU--
GOT A CAR, COOKE?
YES, BUT--
THEN SHUT UP AND LISTEN.
SHE COULD STILL FREAK OUT AND CALL THE COPS, BUT SHE KNEW HOW BADLY THE LAW WOULD FAIL THESE GIRLS.
AND I HAD A FEELING SHE WAS TOUGHER THAN SHE LOOKED.

MY GOD...
I PUT A COUPLE OF MATTRESSES IN THE VAN. I'LL CARRY THE GIRLS OUT, YOU DRIVE THEM BACK TO THE CITY.
I'LL STASH YOUR CAR IN WARRENSBURG AND YOU CAN COME BACK AND GET IT LATER.
BUT... BUT...
OH JESUS, WAIT A MINUTE, WHERE'S EVERYBODY ELSE? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE HERE?
I GAVE YOU THAT FILE AND YOU-- OH, FUCK...!
STOP IT.
YOU'VE GOT SOME STUPID IDEA THAT YOU NEED TO CONFRONT ANYTHING, GET RID OF IT. ALL YOU'LL DO IS GIVE YOURSELF A HEADFUL OF NIGHTMARES.
WHAT HAPPENED HERE WAS DOWN TO ME.

AND I'M NO GOOD TO YOU IF I'M SO GUILTY I GO CRAZY, AM I?
NO, I'M ONLY SUPPOSED TO FEEL SHITTY ENOUGH TO HELP YOU OUT WITH THESE FOUR.
YOU PRICK...!
THAT'S THE SPIRIT.
IF THEY WAKE UP IN THERE THEY'RE GOING TO PANIC...
SHOULDN'T COME OUT OF IT UNTIL TOMORROW NIGHT.
THERE'S A WOMEN'S SHELTER IN--WELL, THERE'S ONE I KNOW WHERE I CAN CALL IN A FAVOR OR TWO. GET THEM IN THERE TEMPORARILY.
AFTER THAT... JESUS, IT'S GOING TO TAKE SOME DOING...
I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN COME UP WITH.
YOU?
WHAT CAN YOU DO?

CRISTU BULAT.
SAME KIND OF COLD, HARD SON OF A BITCH THAT'S BEEN WALKING DOWN OUT OF THOSE FORESTS AND MOUNTAINS FOR CENTURIES.
RUMANIAN, MOLDOVAN, ALBANIAN: CRISTU BOUND A PACK OF THEM TOGETHER, TOOK THEM OFF TO WAR.
PRISON HELD NO TERROR FOR A MAN LIKE HIM. NEITHER DID TORTURE, NOR DID DEATH.
HOW WOULD YOU MAKE HIM AFRAID?
HOW WOULD YOU EVEN TALK TO HIM?
YOU'D START BY SHOWING HIM YOU SPEAK THE LANGUAGE.

...CAROLYN, THIS IS THE THIRD MESSAGE I'VE LEFT AND I REALLY NEED YOU TO CALL ME, OKAY? I KNOW IT'S EARLY BUT I'M DESPERATE HERE, I MEAN THIS COULDN'T BE MORE IMPORTANT...
CIGARS BUY HERE!
FRESH CIGARS
I, I HOPE YOU GET THIS SOON. I HOPE YOU CALL ME BACK. OKAY.
'BYE...
MS. COOKE?
WHA--?
MS. JENNIFER COOKE?
RUSS PARKER AND MARCIE MILLER, MA'AM.
WE'RE WITH THE N.Y.P.D.

UHH...?
CRISTU BULAT.
WAKE UP.
CAN'T
BREATHE RIGHT
NO.
CAN'T SCREAM, EITHER. NOT THAT IT WOULD HELP YOU MUCH OUT HERE.
WHO
THE PUNISHER.

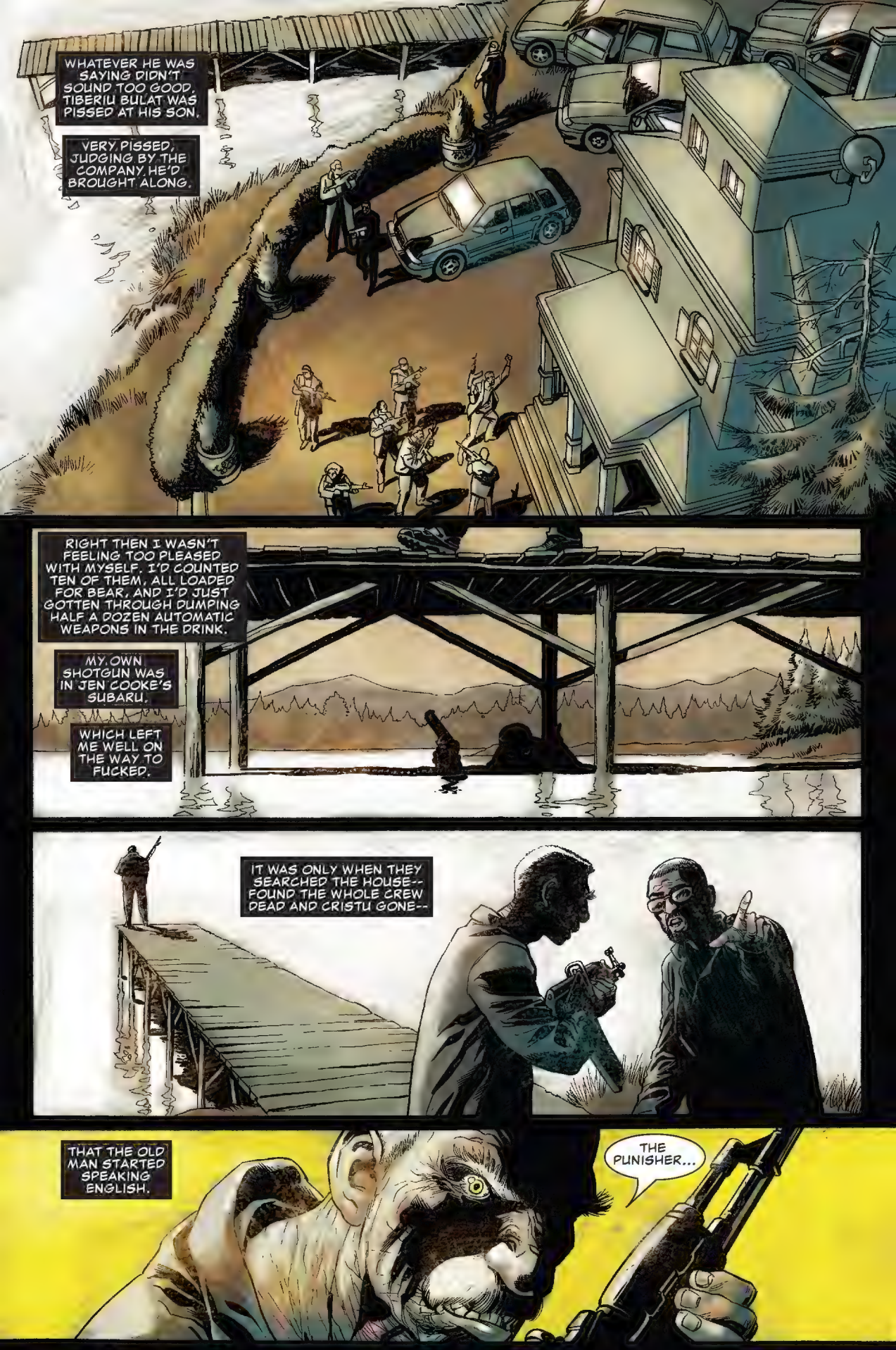
I WANT YOUR WHOLE OPERATION, TOP TO BOTTOM.
I WANT VERA AND I WANT YOUR FATHER.
FUCK YOU
NOT SAYING SHIT
FUCK YOU
YOU SHOULD KNOW THIS IS SURVIVABLE. IT LOOKS BAD, BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO KILL YOU.
BUT YOU SHOULD LET ME GET TO WORK PRETTY SOON.
WHAT
AAAAH--

LEANDRO FERNANDEZ '05
DON'T TAKE TOO LONG TO MAKE YOUR MIND UP.

PUNISHER #29

THE SLAVERS

PART 5


WHATEVER HE WAS SAYING DIDN'T SOUND TOO GOOD. TIBERIU BULAT WAS PISSED AT HIS SON.
VERY PISSED, JUDGING BY THE COMPANY HE'D BROUGHT ALONG.
RIGHT THEN I WASN'T FEELING TOO PLEASED WITH MYSELF. I'D COUNTED TEN OF THEM, ALL LOADED FOR BEAR, AND I'D JUST GOTTEN THROUGH DUMPING HALF A DOZEN AUTOMATIC WEAPONS IN THE DRINK.
MY OWN SHOTGUN WAS IN JEN COOKE'S SUBARU.
WHICH LEFT ME WELL ON THE WAY TO FUCKED.
IT WAS ONLY WHEN THEY SEARCHED THE HOUSE-- FOUND THE WHOLE CREW DEAD AND CRISTU GONE--
THAT THE OLD MAN STARTED SPEAKING ENGLISH.
THE PUNISHER...

LOT MORE SHOUTING AFTER THAT. ORDERS TO GET OUT, I FIGURED, IN CASE IT WAS A TRAP.
I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE PATIENT, BUT MY NUMBER ONE TARGET WAS BARELY TWENTY YARDS AWAY.
WHAT CAN I SAY?
I'M ONLY HUMAN.
AAAAAAAHH!

AAAAAAAAHH!
AAAAAAAAHH!
I SAW STRAIGHTAWAY IT HAD BEEN A MISTAKE.
THESE BOYS WEREN'T GHETTO TRASH LIKE I WAS USED TO, THE KIND WHOSE WILL YOU BREAK IN THE FIRST TEN SECONDS OF A FIREFIGHT. THEY HADN'T PANICKED FOR AN INSTANT.
THEY GOT TO COVER. FOUND THEIR TARGET. SHOT BACK.

THEY WERE SOLDIERS.
VICTORS OF WHO KNEW HOW MANY SHOOT-OUTS, MEN WHO'D KILLED THEIR WAY DOWN FROM THE BLACK BALKAN MOUNTAINS, AN OLD, FAMILIAR DANCE BEGAN: SUPPRESSING FIRE AND FLANK ATTACK.
THE END CAME EVEN FASTER THAN I'D FIGURED.
THE VEST STOPPED TWO. THE THIRD WENT DEEP ENOUGH TO HURT LIKE HELL, NO MORE THAN THAT.
FRESH MAGAZINES CLICKED INTO PLACE.
BOLTS SNAPPED FORWARD, LIFTED ROUNDS.

AAAAH, DEAD MAN!!
YOU ARE A FUCKING DEAD MAN! FUCK WITH ME, I PUT YOU IN THE SOIL!
I TURN YOU INTO SHIT!

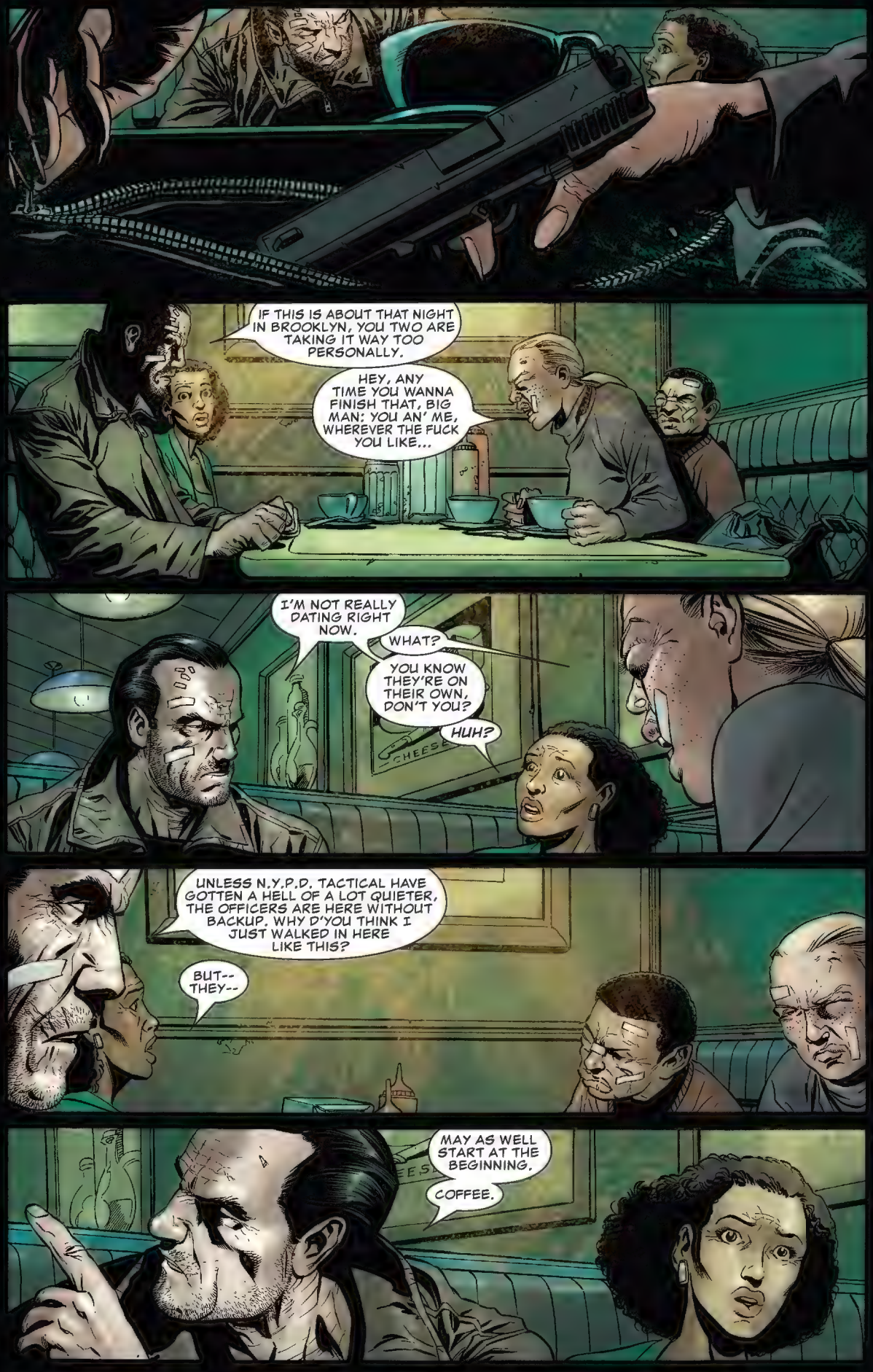
HELLO...?
YOU BETTER GET OUT OF THERE.
THE OLD MAN SHOWED. YOUR CAR WAS STILL THERE, HE'LL BE ABLE TO GET YOUR ADDRESS.
WH-WH-WHAT?
YOU SAID YOU'D TAKE CARE OF--
PUNISHER
I HIT TROUBLE. I CAN STILL FINISH THEM, BUT YOU SHOULD PLAY IT SAFE.
GET MOVING.
YOU WANT TO MEET
LET HIM SAY WHERE
I...
THE GIRLS.
I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.

NINE-THIRTY AT A DINER ON ATLANTIC.
OFFICER PARKER, DO YOU...DO YOU NEED ME FOR THIS?
WE'LL BE ALONG TO ENSURE YOUR PROTECTION. YOU DID VERY WELL THERE; YOUR COOPERATION WILL STAND YOU IN GOOD STEAD FURTHER DOWN THE LINE.
WHAT I SUGGEST YOU DO NOW IS CALL THAT FRIEND YOU MENTIONED, FIND THESE WOMEN A PLACE TO STAY.
YOU'RE NOT ARRESTING THEM?
THAT'LL BE DETERMINED LATER. BUT IF WHAT CASTLE TOLD YOU WAS CORRECT, THEY'LL REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF HOURS.
I'LL JUST, UH...RIGHT...
WHAT IN THE NAME OF JESUS FUCKING CHRIST ARE YOU DOING?
I MEAN THE *PUNISHER?* AND HOW FAR DO YOU THINK YOU CAN TAKE THIS, ANYWAY, BEFORE SHE WISES UP AND REALIZES--
MARCIE, TAKE IT EASY, OKAY? JUST LET ME EXPLAIN, LET ME TELL YOU HOW I SEE THIS GOING...
AH, SHIT.
I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M LISTENING TO YOU.
I CAN'T BELIEVE OUR BROTHER OFFICERS WOULD TAKE MONEY TO BEAT US HALF TO DEATH. OR THAT THERE'S A *SLAVE-RING* OPERATING RIGHT HERE IN NEW YORK CITY.
BUT THERE IT IS.

TIBERIU--?
HELLO, VERA.
I, I WASN'T EXPECTING...
NO. THIS IS WHERE IT ALL GOES ON, IS IT? WHERE YOU AND CRISTU MAKE THE BUSINESS LEGAL?
WELL...NOT HERE EXACTLY, BUT...THE MONEY IS CHANNELLED THROUGH OVERSEAS INSTITUTIONS, AND THEN WE REINVEST IN--
CAN'T PUT SELLING CUNT ON A TAX RETURN, I SUPPOSE.
THAT SON OF MINE. THE SOUL OF A BANKER.
I PASSED ON YOUR MESSAGE TO HIM. LIKE YOU TOLD ME.
UH... TIBERIU...?
VERA.

THREE LITTLE BLACK BOYS COME TO MY HOME TO KILL ME. ONE SAYS HE WAS SENT BY CRISTU.
T--
SHHHH.
SAYS CRISTU SET IT UP, BUT A WOMAN CALLED WITH THE ADDRESS.
SO I GO TO THE HOUSE UPSTATE, BUT CRISTU IS GONE, SO ARE THE GIRLS, AND ALL OUR MEN ARE DEAD.
ONLY THING I FIND THERE IS THE PUNISHER.
AND ALL THAT STOPS ME THINKING YOU ARE IN THIS THING WITH CRISTU IS YOU ARE STILL HERE.
SO IF THE PUNISHER DOES NOT GET HIM, DOES HE RUN OUT ON YOU AS WELL? THE TWO OF YOU TRY TO KILL ME, BUT WHEN IT GOES WRONG CRISTU PANICS?
OR YOU ARE COMPLETELY INNOCENT...
MM?
MM?
PERHAPS CRISTU STILL COMES BACK FOR YOU.
YOU TWO STAY.

DINER
OFFICERS.
YOU REMEMBER US?
PARKER AND MILLER.
PUT THE WEAPON AWAY.
I--
DO IT...


IF THIS IS ABOUT THAT NIGHT IN BROOKLYN, YOU TWO ARE TAKING IT WAY TOO PERSONALLY.
HEY, ANY TIME YOU WANNA FINISH THAT, BIG MAN; YOU AN' ME, WHEREVER THE FUCK YOU LIKE...
I'M NOT REALLY DATING RIGHT NOW.
WHAT?
YOU KNOW THEY'RE ON THEIR OWN, DON'T YOU?
HUH?
UNLESS N.Y.P.D. TACTICAL HAVE GOTTEN A HELL OF A LOT QUIETER, THE OFFICERS ARE HERE WITHOUT BACKUP. WHY D'YOU THINK I JUST WALKED IN HERE LIKE THIS?
BUT-- THEY--
MAY AS WELL START AT THE BEGINNING.
COFFEE.

... SO IT'S NOT ENOUGH WE GET THE SHIT KICKED OUT OF US, THIS LUNATIC WANTS TO KEEP ON PLAYIN' DETECTIVE...
BEFORE THAT, ALL I WANTED TO KNOW WAS WHY THEY WERE SO KEEN ON THIS STUPID PRESS CAMPAIGN THEY USED US IN--THIS FARCE WHERE THEY'RE TRYING TO TAKE YOU DOWN I NEVER EXPECTED THE REACTION WE ENDED UP GETTING.
"WE HAD THE WEEK OFF, SO WE WENT TO SEE ERNIE MOSTOW AGAIN--THE GUY WHO TOLD WESTIN WE WERE ASKING QUESTIONS. HE DIDN'T WANT TO TALK TO US, BUT MARCIE CHANGED HIS MIND.
"LIKE HE TOLD US THE FIRST TIME, WESTIN HAD HIM BY THE BALLS. SO MUCH SO THAT HE HAD MOSTOW DOING FREELANCE WORK--LITTLE ERRANDS, DROP-OFFS, STUFF LIKE THAT."
HIS MOST RECENT JOB, HE SAID, WAS SURVEILLANCE ON A WOMAN CALLED JEN COOKE.
HE'D BEEN TAILING YOU FOR SOMETHING LIKE A MONTH.
SO YOU WENT TO TALK TO HER TO FIND OUT WHY.
YES.
YOU HAD NO IDEA SHE WAS WORKING WITH ME.
NONE.
BUT YOU SHOWED HER YOUR BADGE AND SHE PANICKED, TOLD YOU THE WHOLE THING TOP TO BOTTOM.
PRETTY MUCH.
OH, GIVE HER A FUCKIN' BREAK, WILL YOU?

THE GIRLS OKAY?
WH... WHAT...?
OH.
THEY'RE FINE. I MEAN NO, THEY'RE REALLY FREAKED OUT, BUT MY FRIEND'S LOOKING AFTER THEM.
SHE'S NOT TOO HAPPY ABOUT IT, BUT...SHE...
WHY WOULD THAT GUY BE FOLLOWING ME?
YOU PISSED ANYBODY OFF RECENTLY?
OH, JESUS.
VERA CAUGHT THE GIRL YOU BROUGHT OUT, DON'T FORGET. SHE GAVE THEM EVERYTHING THEY NEEDED ON YOU.
THEY WERE... PROBABLY MAKING THEIR MINDS UP ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT TO KILL YOU.
BUT THIS JUST CONFIRMS THAT WESTIN IS IN BED WITH BULAT'S PEOPLE, RIGHT?
HE INITIATES THE PRESS THING AGAINST YOU, CASTLE, RIGHT AFTER YOU RESCUE THIS GIRL VIORICA. HE ALMOST HAS US HOSPITALIZED WHEN WE ASK THE WRONG QUESTIONS--BUT IN NEITHER INSTANCE WERE ANY OF US *REMOTELY* NEAR THE TRUTH...
PRICK'S TERRIFIED. I MEAN *SLAVERY*--IF *THAT* COMES OUT, HE'LL BE ON THE ALL-DICK DIET IN RIKER'S FOR THE RESTA HIS FUCKIN' LIFE.
WHAT I WANNA KNOW IS WHERE WE GO FROM HERE.

WE?
CHEESE
YOU WANT US GETTING IN YOUR WAY, YOU JUST KEEP RIGHT ON WITH THAT SHIT...
BUT WHAT IF WE DIDN'T GET IN YOUR WAY?
YOU SEE...EVEN IF WE *COULD* GET THE DEPARTMENT TO TAKE A LOOK AT BULAT'S OPERATION, WESTIN WOULD GIVE THEM THE HEADS-UP STRAIGHTAWAY. THEY'D DISAPPEAR. LIKEWISE, WE'VE GOT NOTHING SOLID TYING HIM TO THEM.
NOW, I DON'T THINK EITHER MARCIE OR MYSELF WILL CRY TOO MANY TEARS OVER A SLAVING OUTFIT; FROM WHAT MS. COOKE TOLD US AND SHOWED US AT HER APARTMENT, THE WORLD WON'T MISS A CREW OF SCUM LIKE THAT.
BUT WESTIN *HAS TO BE OURS.*
WE *CANNOT* STAND BY AND LET YOU MURDER A POLICE OFFICER, NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.
THIS SOME KIND OF DEAL?
WE WON'T REPORT WHAT WE'VE DISCOVERED. THAT GIVES YOU A CLEAR RUN AT BULAT AND HIS PEOPLE.
BUT, WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, YOU FIND US SOME SERIOUS SHIT ON WESTIN.
THAT'S THE GENERAL IDEA, RIGHT, RUSS?
LET ME KNOW WHAT THE BIG DECISION IS. I'M GOING TO TAKE THE AIR.

VERA--
VERA, WILL YOU CALM DOWN FOR JUST A SECOND?
OKAY--LOOK--VERA, I'M SORRY I TOLD YOU TO CALM DOWN. I WON'T DO IT AGAIN.
HEY, HAVE YOU ABSOLUTELY GOTTA CALL ME THAT? I MEAN EVERY SINGLE FUCKING TIME, IT GETS A LITTLE MONOTONOUS...
YEAH, I PROMISE I'LL KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR CRISTU. I DUNNO WHAT THE BIG MYSTERY IS, I'M SURE HE'S COMPLETELY FINE.
VERA, WHY ARE YOU WHISPERING?
HELLO?
WESTIN, YOU KNOW ERNIE MOSTOW, RIGHT?
HUH? YEAH. KINDA.
I JUST HEARD HE SWALLOWED A BUNCHA SLEEPIN' PILLS.
WHAT--?
HE'S OKAY, THEY PUMPED HIS STOMACH IN TIME. BUT THE PARAMEDICS SAID SOMEBODY REALLY FUCKED HIM UP, HIS NOSE AND TEETH WERE BUSTED ALL TO SHIT.
JUST THOUGHT YOU'D WANNA KNOW, MAN. LATER.
NYPD
...WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON...?

VERA KONSTANTIN.
OH JESUS--!
CRISTU TOLD ME EVERYTHING.
D DOOOONN'T
EVERYTHING.

AAAAH--!
AAAWWHH!!
HOW TO GET IN HERE. HOW THE BUSINESS OPERATES.
ONLY THING HE DIDN'T KNOW FOR SURE WAS WHERE THE OLD MAN WOULD GO, IF HE WAS HIDING OUT.
AAAAAH! PLEASE!
H-H-HE'LL KILL ME--
NO HE WON'T.
UNNHH!!

HNNNNNNHHHH
HNNNNNNHHHH
SHATTERPROOF.
YOU'LL FALL APART BEFORE THE GLASS DOES.
CRISTU TOLD ME SOMETHING. ABOUT WHEN YOU AND HIM WERE STARTING OUT.
SOMETHING YOU SAID.
WESTIN
RAPE THEM TO BREAK THEM.
"CRISTU DIDN'T GET IT. BUT YOU EXPLAINED.
"THEY HAD TO BE SHOWN RIGHT AWAY JUST WHO WAS IN CONTROL.
"THEY COULDN'T STOP YOU WHEN YOU HAD THEM LIFTED OFF THE STREETS. THEY COULDN'T STOP YOU NOW.

"THEY HAD TO UNDERSTAND THAT THEY WERE POWERLESS TO PREVENT ANYTHING FROM BEING DONE TO THEM."
CRISTU WAS THE BUSINESSMAN. THE OLD MAN'S A SOLDIER.
BUT YOU'RE THE ONE WHO MAKES IT WORK.
WAAAAH--!
NO! GET OFF ME! NO!!
YOU CAN'T BREAK THE GLASS.
BUT YOU HIT IT HARD ENOUGH, OFTEN ENOUGH--MAYBE TWENTY-FIVE OR THIRTY TIMES--EVENTUALLY YOU'LL BEND THE FRAME.

PLEEEEEASE...!
WE--WE WANTED TO BE HERE...
WE JUST WANTED TO DO BUSINESS...
SO?
ALL THAT COUNTS IS YOU CAN'T STOP ME.
I'M STRONGER THAN YOU, SO I CAN DO ANYTHING I WANT.
ISN'T THAT THE WAY IT WORKS?
NO!!

IT WAS IN THAT MOMENT THAT I REALIZED SOMETHING.
A DULL, BLURRED FEELING THAT I'D HAD SINCE THIS WHOLE MESS BEGAN, ALL OF A SUDDEN CRYSTAL CLEAR.
LEANDRO FERNANDEZ '05
IT HAD BEEN A LONG, LONG TIME SINCE I HATED ANYONE THE WAY I HATED THEM.

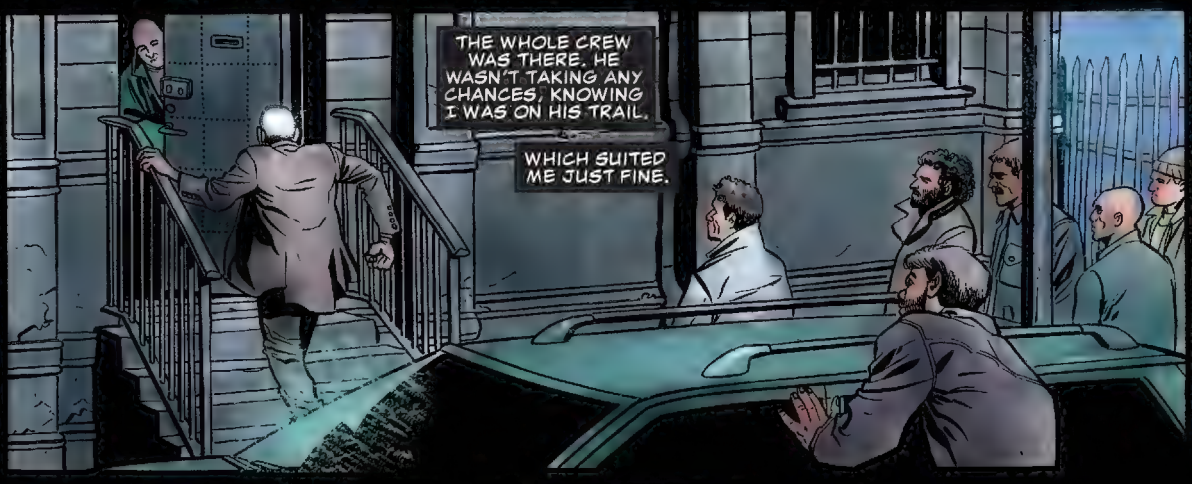
PUNISHER #30

FOOD AND CLEAN CLOTHES.
HOW MUCH LONGER...?
TONIGHT.
BUT...
WHAT HAPPENS TO ME AFTER THAT?
JEN COOKE GOT FOUR OF THE OTHER GIRLS INTO A WOMEN'S SHELTER. TEMPORARY, UNTIL SHE CAN FIGURE OUT SOMETHING BETTER.
COOKE IS STUPID BITCH WHO GETS MY BABY *MURDERED!*
HOW DO I TRUST HER? HOW DOES SHE NOT FUCK UP AGAIN, THROW *ME* TO WOLVES THIS TIME?
BECAUSE BY THIS TIME TOMORROW, THE WOLVES WILL ALL BE DEAD.
WAIT 'TIL I CALL YOU.

WELL, HERE WE ARE, WAITING FOR OUR PHONE CALL FROM THE PUNISHER...
MARCIE, I KNOW YOU HAVE SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITH THIS, BUT... WELL...
HAS IT OCCURRED TO YOU THAT BRINGING IN A CASE LIKE THIS ONE COULD BE THE MAKING OF US...?
NOW HOW DID I KNOW THAT WAS GONNA COME UP SOONER OR LATER? FUCK THE SLAVING OPERATION; RUSS AN' MARCIE JUST MIGHT GET A SHOT AT MAKIN' DETECTIVE...
EXCEPT HAS IT OCCURRED TO YOU THAT TAKIN' DOWN A COP MIGHT NOT BE THE BEST WAY TO DO IT? THAT EVEN A PRICK LIKE WESTIN HAS FRIENDS ALL OVER THE DEPARTMENT?
HEY, CONSIDERING THE HIGH REGARD MY BROTHER OFFICERS HOLD ME IN AT THE MOMENT, I CAN'T HONESTLY SAY I GIVE A DAMN.
LOOK, IF YOU'RE REALLY THIS UNCOMFORTABLE, MAYBE YOU SHOULD JUST GO ON HOME. LET ME HANDLE THE REST.
I'LL GIVE YOU A CALL WHEN IT'S ALL OVER.
OH, I AIN'T UP TO THIS, IS THAT THE IDEA?
YOU KNOW HOW LONG I'VE HAD TO WATCH YOUR BACK? AN' NOW I'M THE ONE CAN'T HANDLE THE--
RIGHT, YOU WERE WATCHING MY BACK, YOU BET. WILL IT BE NIGGER JOKES OR FAG JOKES TODAY, OFFICER MILLER?

IF THAT'S HOW YOU THINK IT IS THEN YOU'RE A BIGGER ASSHOLE THAN I THOUGHT.
OR DO YOU WANNA FIND OUT WHAT IT'S LIKE, BEIN' GAY IN THE N.Y.P.D. AND NOT HAVIN' ANY FRIENDS?
AH, NOW YOU'RE FIGHTING DIRTY, MARCIE...
FIGHTING DIRTY? YOU HOOKED US UP WITH A MASS MURDERER!
NO ONE'S HOLDING A GUN TO YOUR HEAD. YOU CAN WALK AWAY WHENEVER YOU WANT, YOU CAN PRETEND YOU NEVER KNEW A THING ABOUT IT...
NO, RUSS, I CAN'T DO THAT. YOU WANNA KNOW WHY?
BECAUSE I CAN'T JUST PRETEND ANYTHING, THAT AIN'T HOW I LIVE MY LIFE. THE ONLY WAY TO WALK AWAY WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE DOIN' IS TO RAT YOU OUT.
AN' I AIN'T A RAT.
SO ALL THAT LEAVES IS TO SIT TIGHT AN' WATCH OUT FOR MY PARTNER.

BETWEEN WHAT CRISTU SAID AND VERA'S FILES, I KNEW THE OPERATION INSIDE OUT.
WHICH DIDN'T GIVE ME ALL THE CARDS. THE OLD MAN STILL HAD HALF A DOZEN HARDCORE MERCS, AND EVEN VERA DIDN'T KNOW WHERE HE'D BEEN HIDING.
ON TOP OF THAT, IT DIDN'T TAKE A SHRINK TO SEE HE WAS A FULL-ON MANIAC.
THE WHOLE THING NEEDED CAREFUL HANDLING.
WHAT I DID FIND IN THE FILES WAS THE LOCATION OF THEIR HOUSE, THE ONE THEY MOVED THE GIRLS TO AFTER BROOKLYN. IN THE THREE DAYS SINCE VERA'S FREEFALL, I'D WATCHED THE PLACE UNTIL I GOT TO KNOW THE SETUP.
THREE MORE SCUMBAGS, VARYING THEIR TIMES TO COME AND GO. SAME SECURITY AS BEFORE. SAME ATTENTION PAID TO LITTLE DETAILS.
BUT THIS TIME I HAD THE NUMBER. I COULD BOOK MYSELF A PARTY. ME AND THE GUYS. SIX OUT-OF-TOWNERS WHO GOT THE WORD ONLINE, ABOUT THESE FOREIGN CHICKS YOU CAN'T BELIEVE.
CRISTU WAS GONE AND VERA WAS DEAD.
SO WHEN ME AND THE GUYS DIDN'T SHOW, AND A WHOLE NIGHT'S BUSINESS DISAPPEARED DOWN THE SHITTER, THE HEAD SCUMBAG HAD TO CALL...


THE WHOLE CREW WAS THERE. HE WASN'T TAKING ANY CHANCES, KNOWING I WAS ON HIS TRAIL.
WHICH SUITED ME JUST FINE.

I WAS GLAD IT WAS THE OLD MAN. CRISTU WOULD HAVE CLOSED THE HOUSE THE INSTANT VERA DIED, MOVED AS OFTEN AS IT TOOK TO LOSE ME.
WOULD HAVE GONE INSIDE AND LOCKED THE DOORS, BEFORE HE STARTED SCREAMING AT HIS PEOPLE.

ANYHOW.
MY REAL STROKE OF LUCK WAS THE DRAIN COVER, RIGHT OUTSIDE THE HOUSE.
THE ONE I'D WIRED WITH THIRTY POUNDS OF T.N.T.

THEY KEPT THE GIRLS UPSTAIRS, WOULDN'T LET THEM NEAR THE EXITS.
WHICH WAS GOOD AND BAD AT THE SAME TIME.
THE OLD MAN WAS FIRST ON HIS FEET, OF COURSE.
TIBERIU!
I WANTED HIM WOUNDED--
BUT I WASN'T EVEN GETTING THAT.

COME ON! COME ON, PIGFUCKER!
WAAAAAAH!!
I FUCKING SHIT BETTER MEN THAN YOU! YOU HEAR ME? PUNISHER, YOU HEAR?
COME ON IN, COCKSUCKER...!
SHOW ME WHAT YOU GOT.

AAAAH--!
WHAT DID I HAVE?
A SICK OLD FUCK WHO STILL THOUGHT HE WAS A SOLDIER.
NO CLEAR SHOT.
AND A WORD.
<COWARD.>
WHAT DID I HAVE?

IT WAS SOMETHING CRISTU KEPT CALLING ME, WHILE HIS GUTS WERE DRIPPING ON HIM FROM THE TREE.
I GOT CURIOUS ENOUGH TO LOOK IT UP.
P-P-P-POLICE--!
GET THE OTHER TWO, IF THEY'RE STILL HERE.
CALL THIS NUMBER.
GO.

OH.
IS OFFICER PARKER...?
GONE HOME. WE NEVER HEARD FROM CASTLE, SO HE FIGURED HE'D GRAB SOME SLEEP.
HOW'S THE ROOM?
8
LOOK, I HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING EITHER...I MEAN I DON'T KNOW HIM, HE ONLY CAME TO ME FOR THIS ONE THING...
I KNOW. I'VE BEEN WONDERING ABOUT THE GIRLS, IS ALL.
ME TOO. THEY CAN'T STAY AT THE SHELTER FOREVER, I CAN TELL YOU THAT MUCH.
D'YOU WANT TO COME IN?
THANKS.
YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE THE MESS.

YOU KNOW IT DOES NO GOOD, DON'T YOU? THE WAY HE WORKS?
IT NEVER SOLVES THE PROBLEM, IT NEVER REALLY ENDS ANYTHING...
I JUST WANTED HIM TO END *THEM.*
AFTER ALL THE NIGHTS OF BANGING MY HEAD AGAINST THE WALL, TRYING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE TRAFFICKING-- I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW MUCH I CAME TO HATE THESE PEOPLE.
AND...I ENDED UP DOING SOMETHING CRAZY.
YOU TRY IT. TRY TAKING A LOOK THROUGH THESE FILES.
THE GIRL WHO WAS A VIRGIN, AND THEY MADE HER GO WITH ELEVEN MEN THE NIGHT THEY ABDUCTED HER.
THE WOMAN WHO WAS RAPED *EIGHTY-EIGHT* TIMES ON CHRISTMAS DAY-- DEVOUT GREEK ORTHODOX, BUT NOW SHE DOESN'T THINK SHE DESERVES TO GO TO CHURCH. DIDN'T EVEN THINK SHE HAD THE RIGHT TO SEE HER CHILD.
THE BIG TSUNAMI LAST YEAR? YOU KNOW THE SLAVERS HAD TEAMS OUT THERE, TRYING TO BEAT THE RELIEF WORKERS TO ALL THOSE BRAND-NEW ORPHANS?
I KNOW HIS WAY IS TERRIBLY, TERRIBLY WRONG. I'M A SOCIAL WORKER, OF COURSE I KNOW THAT.
BUT...
YEAH.
AFTER THE LAST COUPLE OF WEEKS--
WHAT I *KNOW* YOU COULD PROBABLY WRITE ON THE HEAD OF A MATCHSTICK.

OLD MOLDOVAN SAYING...YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT ANY MORE?
YEAH. OLD SAYING:
"AN UNBEATEN WOMAN IS LIKE AN UNTIDY HOUSE."
I TELL MEN THINGS LIKE THAT AND THEY LAUGH. I TELL THEM THE STUFF I'VE TOLD YOU, AND...SOME OF THEM CAN'T QUITE RID THEMSELVES OF THE IDEA THAT THESE GIRLS DESERVE IT, OR EVEN WANT IT...
THESE GUYS HAVE MOTHERS, WIVES, SISTERS, DAUGHTERS--I MEAN IF I CAN'T CONVINCE THEM, WHERE THE HELL AM I GOING TO GO FOR HELP?
EXCUSE ME.
HELLO...?
WHAT? WAIT-- PLEASE, SLOW DOWN--
HE SAID WHAT?
YES, OKAY, BUT WHERE ARE YOU? CAN YOU SEE A SIGN?
WELL, CAN YOU FIND ONE AND TELL ME WHAT IT SAYS?
MOTHERFUCKER.
HE'S JUST STUCK ME WITH THREE MORE.

I KNEW FROM THE START I'D NEVER PUT AN END TO IT. NO MORE THAN I COULD STOP THE TRADE IN HEROIN, OR KEEP THE TIDE FROM COMING IN.
THE MOST I COULD DO, I FIGURED, WAS GIVE THEM PAUSE FOR THOUGHT.
I CALLED DETECTIVE WESTIN, SAID I HAD HIS FILE FROM VERA'S OFFICE.
GAVE HIM A LOCATION.
OH MY GOD.
DIDN'T TELL HIM WHO I WAS ON THE PHONE.

D-D-DON'T YOU--
YOU REALLY GOING TO PULL THAT?
OH, JESUS.
WHAT IS IT YOU WANT...?
GOT A DEAL FOR YOU.
DELIVER A PACKAGE TO THE BULATS' CONTACTS IN MOLDOVA. THE EUROPEAN END OF THE OPERATION.
AND YOU HAVE A FRIEND IN HOMELAND SECURITY. THE ONE GOT THE VISAS FOR CRISTU AND HIS PEOPLE.
Y... YEAH...
TELL HIM YOU'RE GOING TO NEED EIGHT MORE. I'LL GIVE YOU THE NAMES, YOU CAN MAKE THE CALL FROM HERE.
THE FILE'S YOURS THE DAY YOU GET BACK FROM EASTERN EUROPE.

WHAT, UH, WHAT AM I GONNA BE DELIVERING?
HNNH...?
HHH... WHA...
WHAT IS THIS...?
YOU.
YOU ARE THE LITTLE SHIT.
UM... MISTER BULAT, I...
YOU ARE WITH THE PUNISHER? FUCKING TRAITOR, YOU STAB US IN THE FUCKING BACK?
NO! NO, SIR, IT ISN'T LIKE THAT! I--
WHAT? WHAT?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, YOU LITTLE SHIT--?
ANSWER ME, YOU FUCK! ANSWER ME!
YOU TELL ME WHAT THIS IS, YOU TELL ME WHAT IS GOING ON!

WAAAAAH--!
YOU SHITEATER! YOU FUCK! AAAAACCCCHH!
YOU LET ME OUT OF THIS CHAIR, I SHOW YOU HOW A MAN FIGHTS!
AAAACCCHHH!
YOU DIRTY, MOTHERFUCKING, PIECE OF DOGSHIT FAGGOT COWARD--
YOU--
YOU...
REC
DON'T COME BACK HERE.
NO!!

EEEEEEEGGGHHH!
EEEEEEEGGGHHH!
EEEEEEEGGGHHH!
EEEEEEEGGGHHH!

DEAL?

GATE 41
HE FLEW OUT TWO DAYS LATER.
I KNOW; I WAS AT KENNEDY TO BE SURE HE MADE THE FLIGHT.
I SENT THE FILE TO PARKER THAT SAME DAY-- NOT THAT IT WAS ANY USE, BECAUSE WESTIN WAS NEVER SEEN AGAIN.
IF CRISTU AND THE OLD MAN ARE ANYTHING TO GO BY, THE MOLDOVANS WON'T HAVE EVEN LEFT THE FINGERPRINTS.
MOVIES
I GET WORD OF OTHER TRAFFICKERS FROM TIME TO TIME. I HIT ONE HERE, A COUPLE THERE, BUT THE OPERATIONS GET MORE SOPHISTICATED BY THE DAY.
JEN COOKE ISN'T SHARING ANY INTEL. HER CONSCIENCE WON'T ALLOW IT, NOT AGAIN.
MILLER QUIT THE FORCE AND CAME TO WORK WITH HER.
THEY DO IT THEIR WAY, I DO IT MINE.

COOKE DID TELL ME HOW THE GIRLS WERE DOING. I RESCUED THEM, SHE SAID; SHE THOUGHT I'D WANT TO KNOW.
VISAS OR NOT, THEIR OLD LIFE TOOK ITS TOLL. ONE WENT BACK TO HOOKING, ONE'S JUST GONE. TWO ARE DEFINITELY DEAD.
THE OTHER THREE ARE DOING WELL ENOUGH.
AND VIORICA.
THE GIRL THIS STARTED WITH, SCREAMING INTO THE BROOKLYN RAIN.
SOME DAYS ARE GOOD.
SOME DAYS AREN'T.

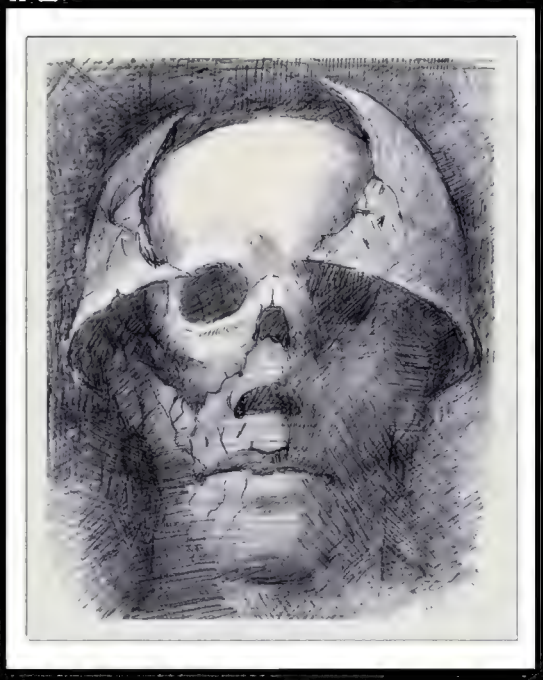
THE SLAVERS

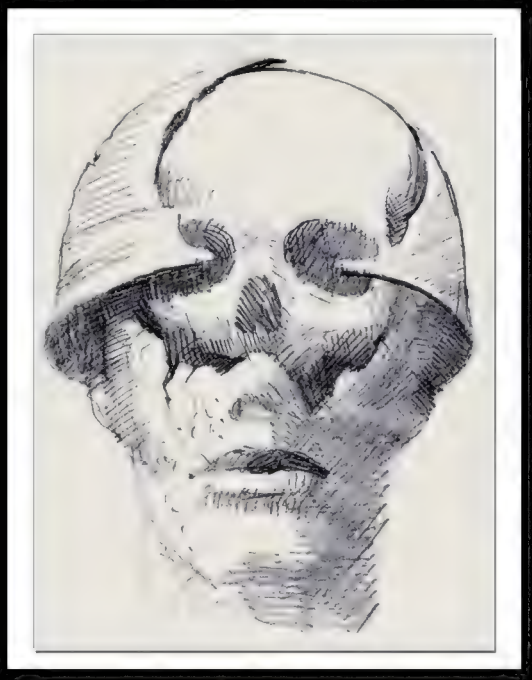
Conclusion

BORN COVER SKETCHES

By Wieslaw Walkuski

#1





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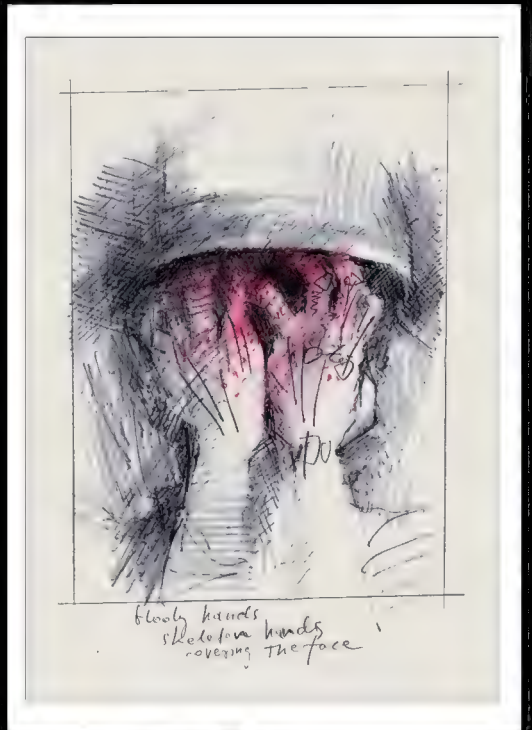


#3

cracked face
destruction / wreck / morbid
structure

UNUSED

no face / bloody incredible
teeth

Structure of a spider's web
& different human wreck materials
bloody dogs/vampires teeth

THOUGHTS ABOUT *BORN*

by Darick Robertson

My own father, Ira D. Robertson, and my uncle both fought in World War II. As a result I grew up with a lot of respect for people in the military, despite my own liberal political views. I have a deep respect for the people who put themselves in harm's way and the bravery involved to fight for an ideal or even for a sense of duty. When I began gathering research for this project, I bought hardcover books collecting *Life* magazine pictures by renowned photojournalists like Larry Burrows (who died in Vietnam, and took some incredible pictures). I watched documentaries to get a better understanding of the politics involved and found many websites put up by veterans sharing their experiences. I started to experience the war in another way entirely, the way only truth captured on film can affect you.

When assistant editor Nick Lowe (whose assistance was INVALUABLE to this project) offered his father David Lowe's personal photo album from Vietnam, it was such an incredible opportunity that I immediately promised I would take the best of care of the book.

Looking through the album was a profound experience. Many simple things people wouldn't think to photograph get captured when someone is just taking snapshots of the people they're with and the things that they're doing throughout the course of the day. I really wanted to capture those details. It felt important to me, because while the Punisher is fictional, the Vietnam War was not, and like Nick's father, David, there are many veterans still alive today to whom the Vietnam War is very much a reality to them, not the stuff of fiction. This is a story of what that war did to this character, but I wanted to show my respect for the people who really went through it. I felt it was important to capture those details as a way of showing respect for the experience. By immersing my imagination in the reality of that environment, I felt I could bring more to the characters and their performances. I did all I could to capture the details of the place and equipment they were wearing and using.

Nick told me that his father was really impressed with *Born*. David Lowe went so far as to even send copies of *Born* along to his veteran buddies.

That means more to me than any other compliment I received for my work on this series.

Fire Support Basecamp Hampton, February 1969

Photo courtesy of David Lowe

VIETNAM PHOTO REFERENCE

Courtesy of David Lowe

Cú Chi, August 1969

Cú Chi, August 1969

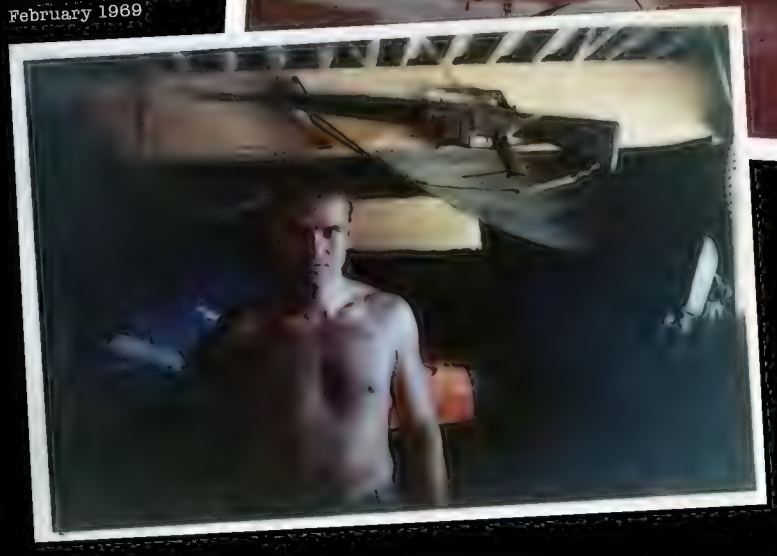
Cú Chi, August 1969

Cú Chi, August 1969

Fire Support Basecamp Hampton, February 1969

Fire Support Basecamp Hampton, February 1969

Cu Chi, August 1969


Fire Support Basecamp Hampton, February 1969

CHARACTER DESIGNS

by Darick Robertson

When I first spoke to Garth about what he wanted Frank to look like, Garth emphasized to me that he's young but had seen too much to look young. I thought about that and laughed at myself because the first designs I did for Frank in 'Nam were comparable to his present-day look. I sort of smacked my forehead and thought "Duh; of course he's young."

So I did these sketches while reading the script on a plane to Germany. I liked the bald one, but thought it was a little too extreme. This was a story of a man about to go to extremes, not about one who already had. The other version is a mohawk haircut, similar to those worn by the Screaming Eagles in WWII. The fact that I was emulating the wrong war steered me away from that design.

The final sketch captured something that I didn't expect to find in Frank: innocence. I ultimately felt the right way to go was to show the young man as much as possible, so he would contrast by the end, the way that Charlie Sheen transforms in *Platoon*. So I wrote the name "Castle" under it, as my chosen concept. Garth liked that one, too.

The thumbnail for the splash stayed pretty much intact from the layout to the finished page and was the first page I worked on when beginning the series.

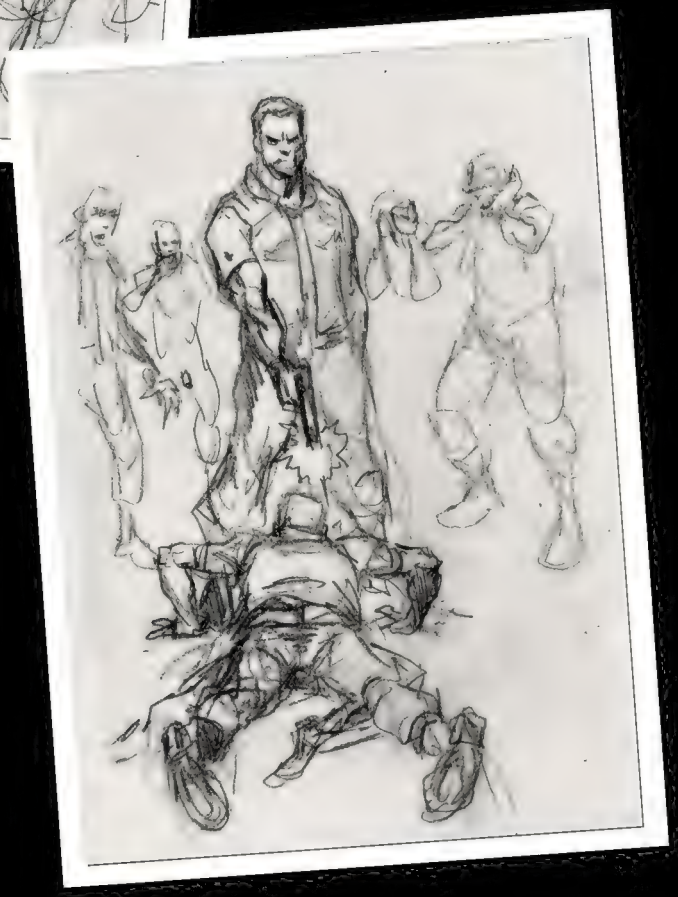
I have a bad habit of working my character designs out right there on the page, which means I rarely have any really juicy sketchbook stuff for these sections. I have to see the character performing the script in front of my eyes before I can determine if the design is working. So these designs for Angel and Stevie are really just batted out based on what I was reading about them in the script. (You can see I needed practice drawing Vietnam-era Marine combat helmets, as Stevie's is way too small.) I sometimes like to ask Garth what actors he pictures when scripting. He didn't have a lot of suggestions for Stevie and Angel, but described their personalities well. I knew he wanted strength of character and innocence in Stevie; the second page that I drew to show Garth was page five from issue one, and he broke into a wide grin when he saw it, so I figured I nailed it.

With Angel, I just wanted him to look lost and angry.

LAYOUTS FOR BORN #2 PAGE 15
by Darick Robertson

This was an important moment in the story, and I drew it out badly a couple of times before going to my sketchbook to get the angle right. I didn't want to glorify the woman's death, and even though the book was a MAX title, sometimes it's better to leave the violence to the imagination.

What was important in this scene was the distance the soldiers give Frank and their lack of action to intervene. In my sketch I drew their reactions, but when I was laying it out on the page, I felt that logically they would back off when seeing the gun and by focusing solely on Frank and his action, you couldn't be distracted by anything else but that which was happening in the moment — Frank's mercy kill, and the evidence of his growing into a sociopath.



LAYOUTS FOR BORN #1 PAGE 2
by Darick Robertson

This was the most challenging part of issue one for me. I really wanted to give the scene room and atmosphere, but still had to tell the sequence in pages with five panels. This was one of those sequences that if I'd had all the time and room that I needed, I would have drawn each panel as double-page spreads to really give the size of that C-4 plane and the crash its due.

So I did this layout while reading the script, coincidentally on a plane flying over the Atlantic. I was so excited about this series that I was eager to lay it out as I read it.

PUNISHER DESIGN
BY LEWIS LAROSA

- WHITE SKULL ON FLAK JACKET
- BLACK JEANS (MAYBE BLACK MILITARY PANTS)
- BLACK LEATHER JACKET, SOMETIMES LONGCOAT
- OVER 50, LOTS OF WRINKLES, CREASES, and SCARS.
- SLICKED BACK HAIR
- BROKEN NOSE
- STUBBLE and BODY HAIR
- SQUINTY, CLINT EASTWOOD EYES
- BIG GUY, MAYBE 6'3", 240 lbs.

PUNISHER DESIGN
BY LEANDRO FERNANDEZ

PUNISHER #7

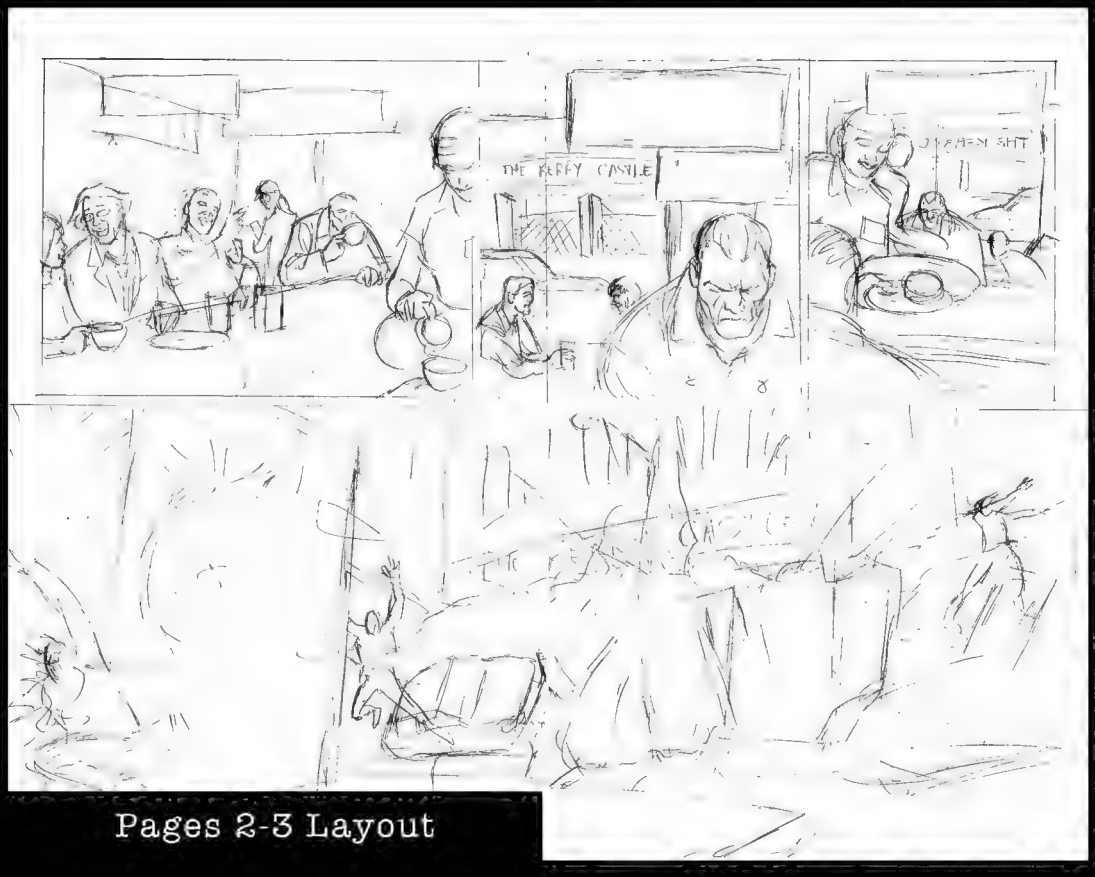
From layouts to finished colors.
Pencils/inks by Leandro Fernández. Colors by Dean White.

Page 1 Layout

Page 1 Pencils

Page 1 Inks

Page 1 Colors

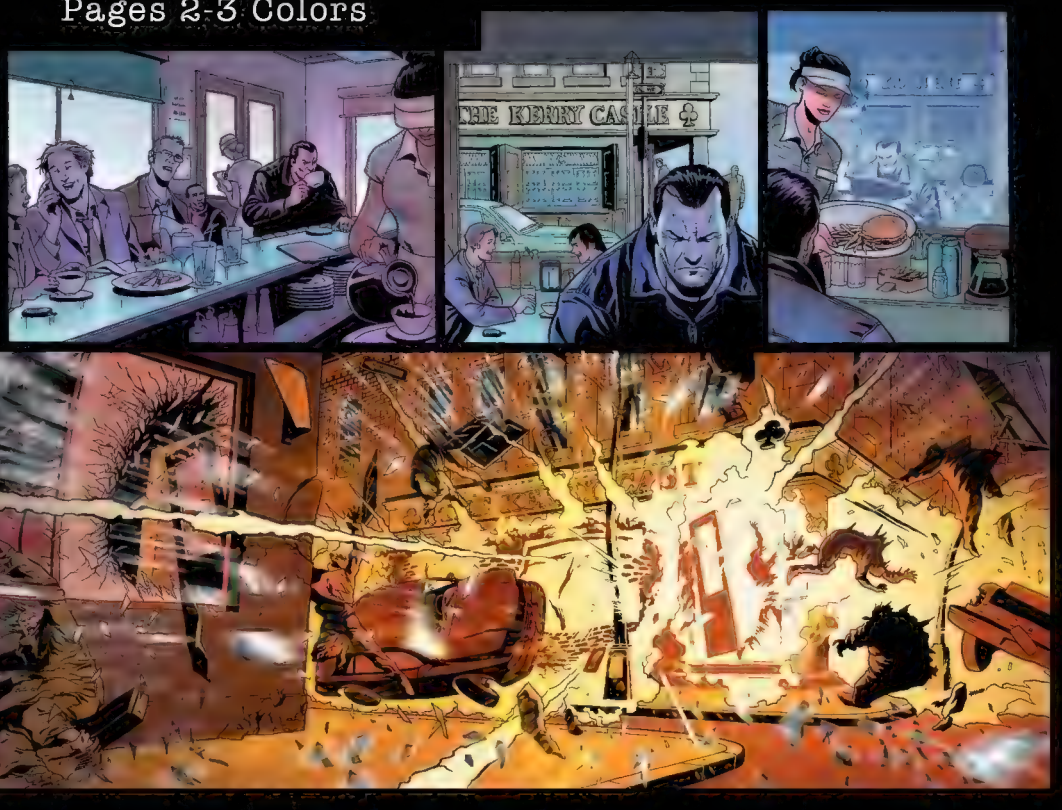


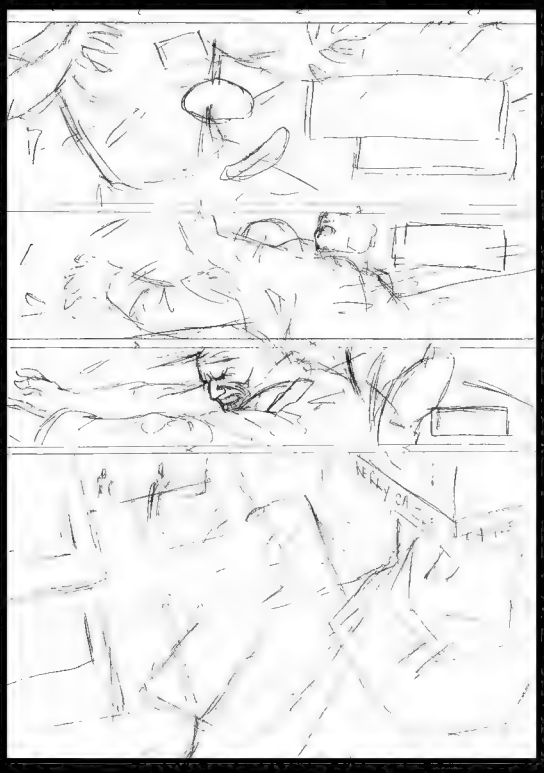
Pages 2-3 Layout

Pages 2-3 Pencils

Pages 2-3 Inks

Pages 2-3 Colors





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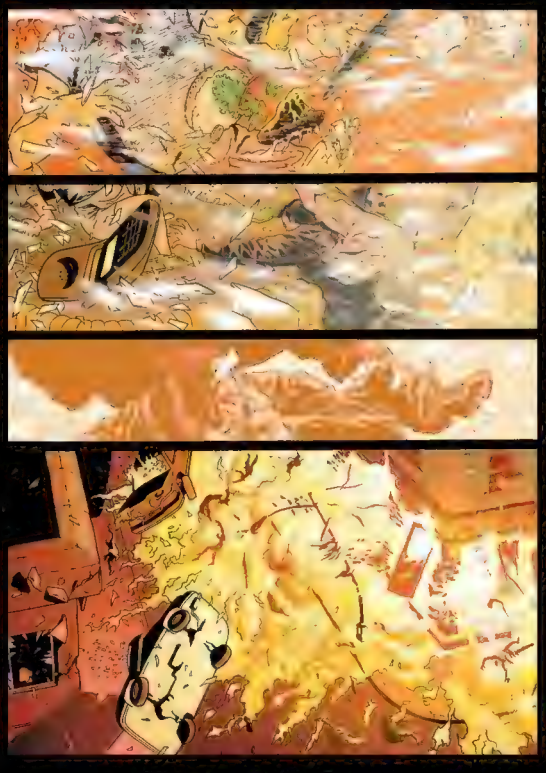
Page 4 Pencils

Page 4 Inks



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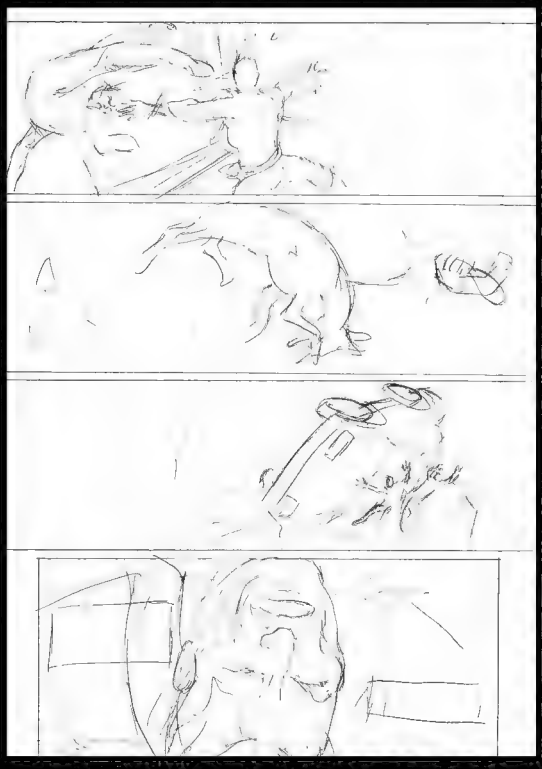

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Page 5 Pencils

Page 5 Inks

Page 5 Colors

Page 6 Layout

Page 6 Pencils

Page 6 Inks

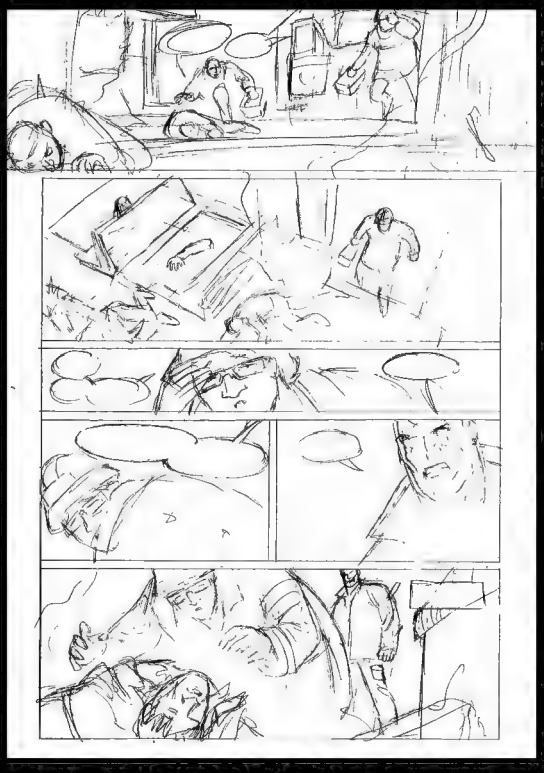
Page 6 Colors

Page 7 Layout

Page 7 Pencils

Page 7 Inks

Page 7 Colors



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Page 8 Pencils

Page 8 Inks

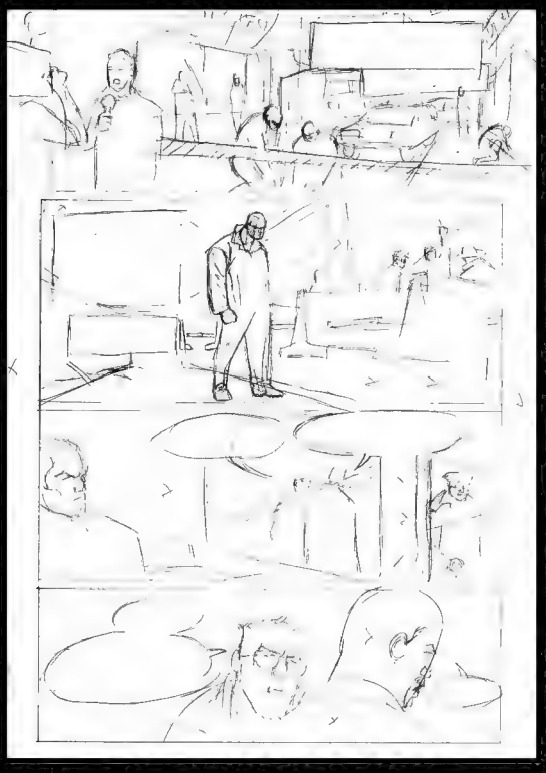
Page 8 Colors

Page 9 Layout

Page 9 Pencils

Page 9 Inks

Page 9 Colors



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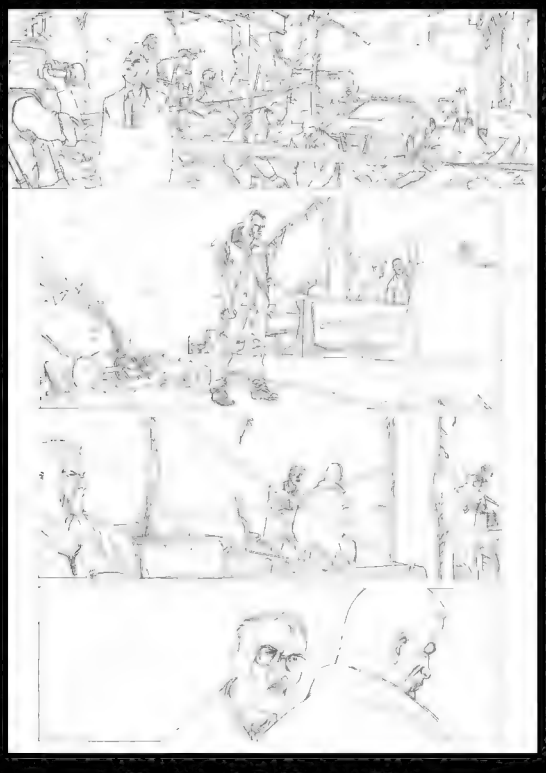

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Page 10 Inks

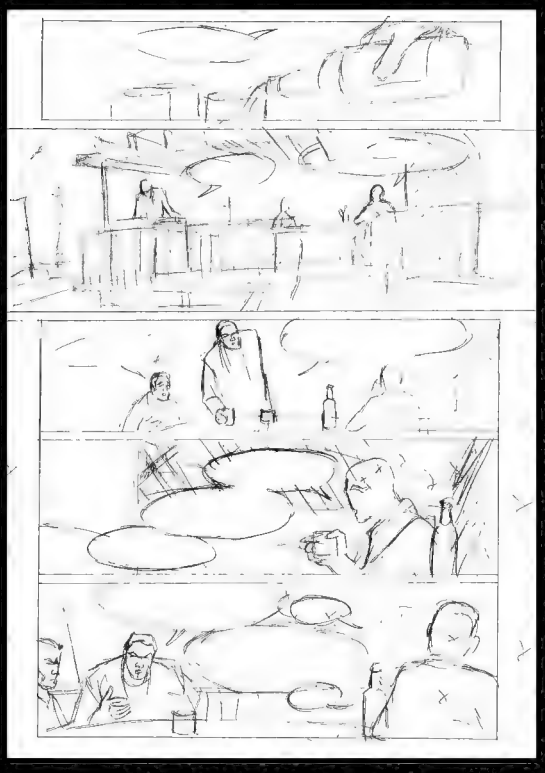
Page 10 Colors

Page 11 Layout

Page 11 Pencils

Page 11 Inks

Page 11 Colors



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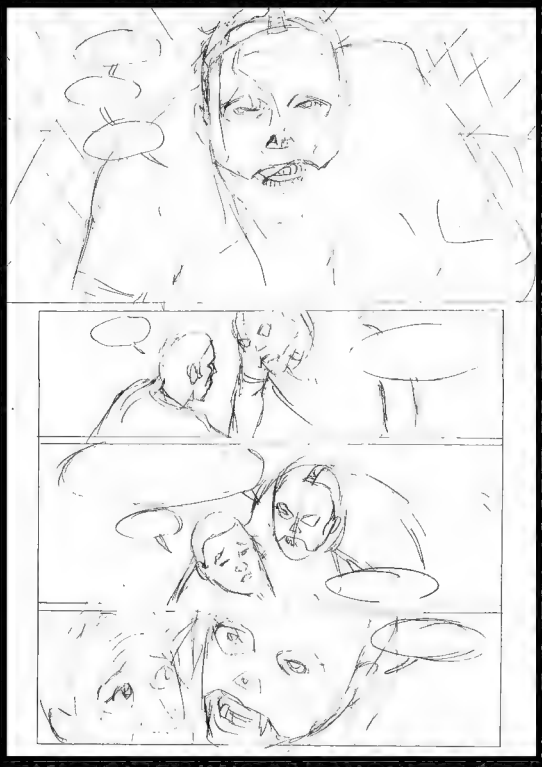
Page 12 Pencils

Page 12 Inks

Page 12 Colors



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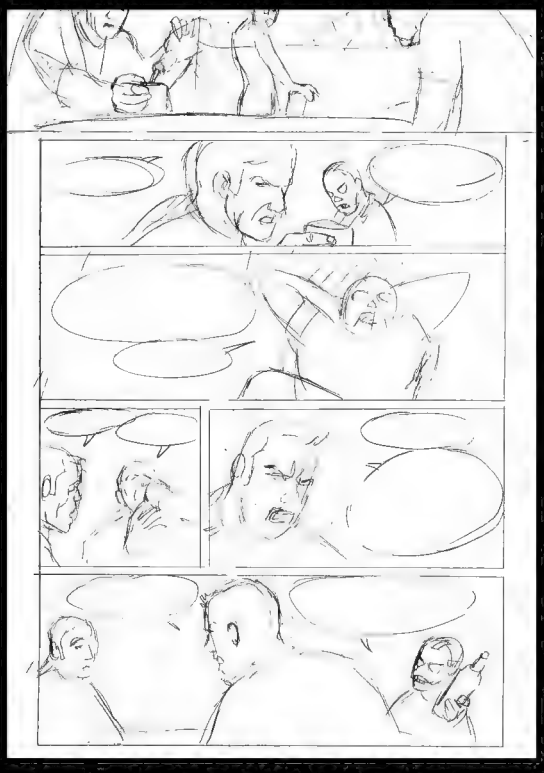
Page 13 Inks

Page 13 Colors



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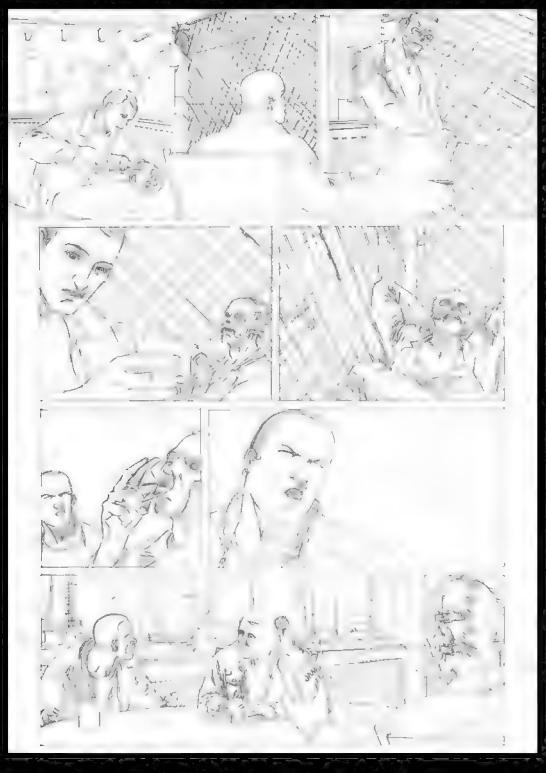

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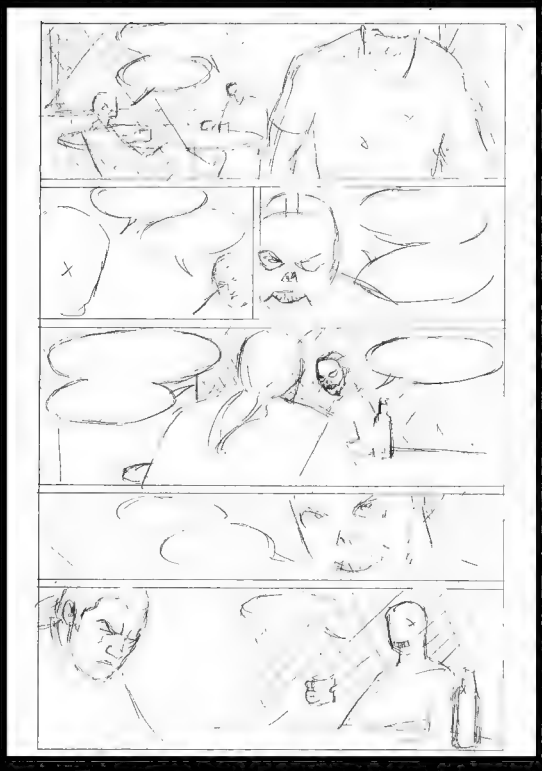
Page 14 Inks

Page 14 Colors



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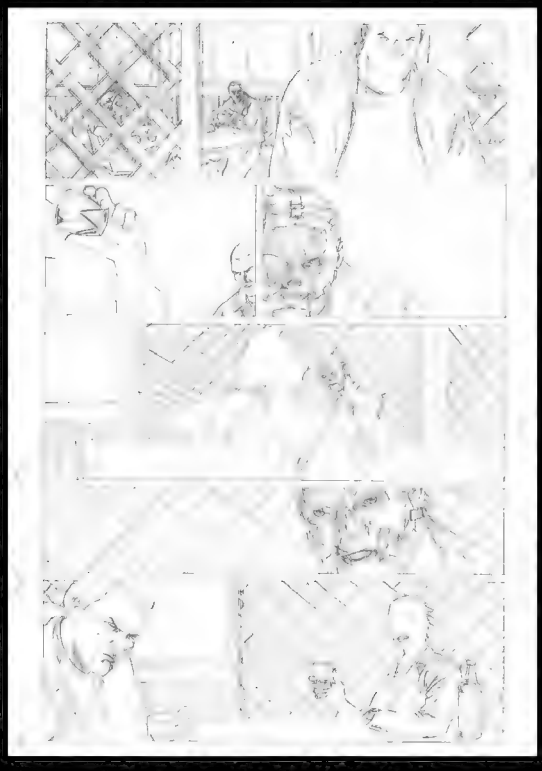

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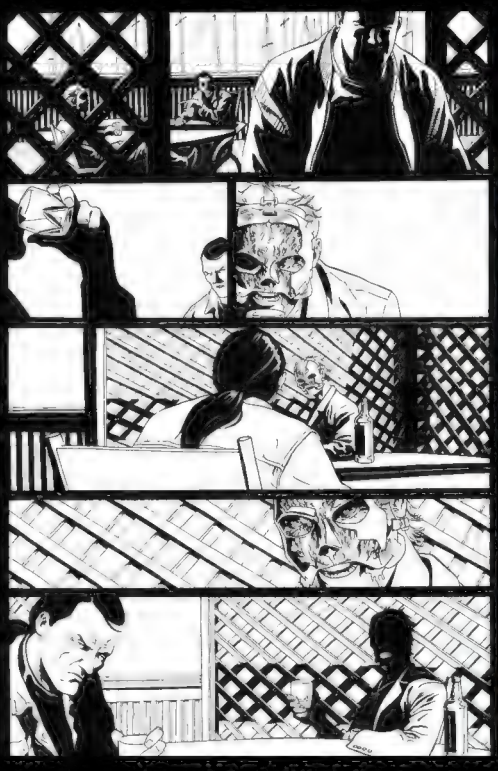

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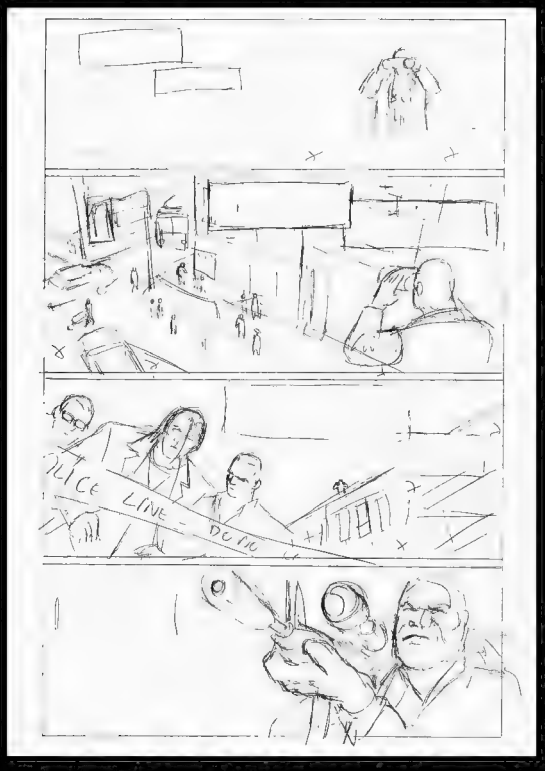

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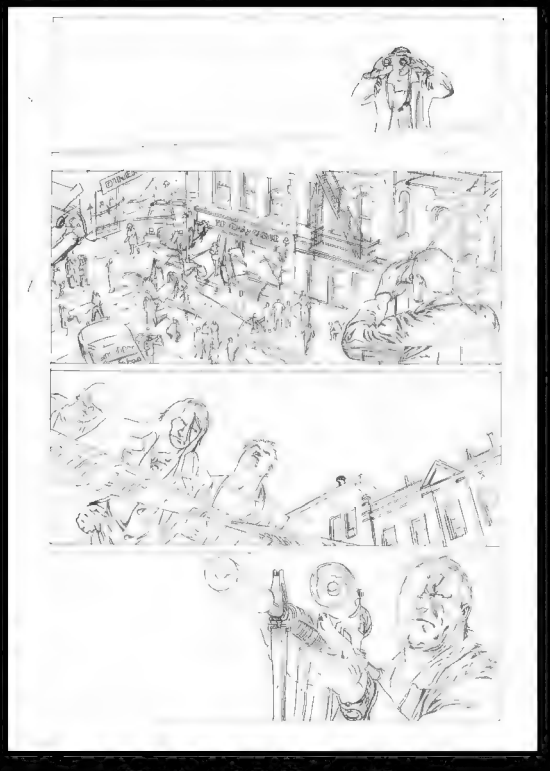

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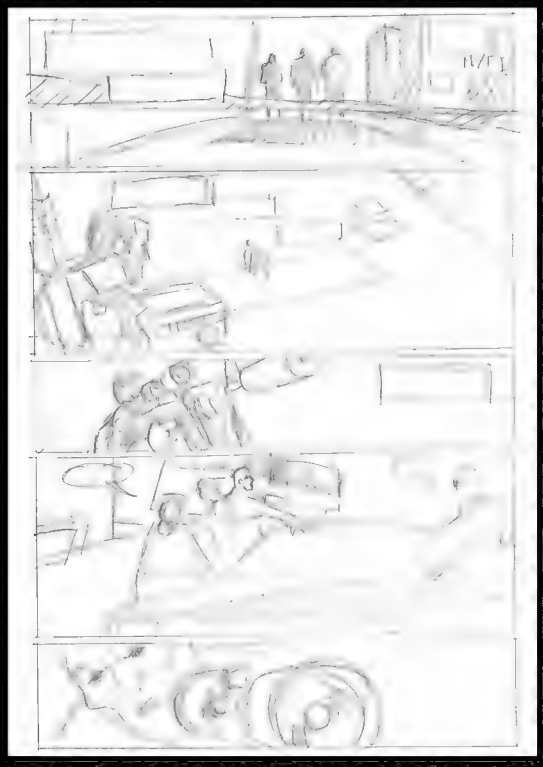

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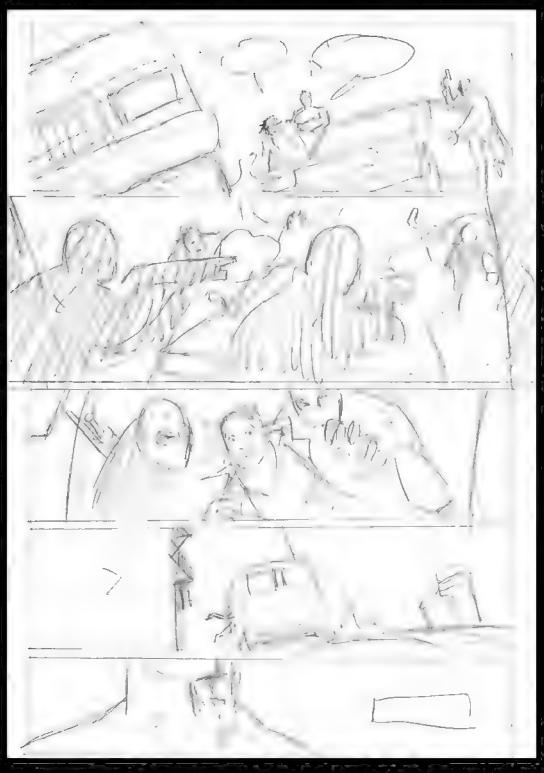

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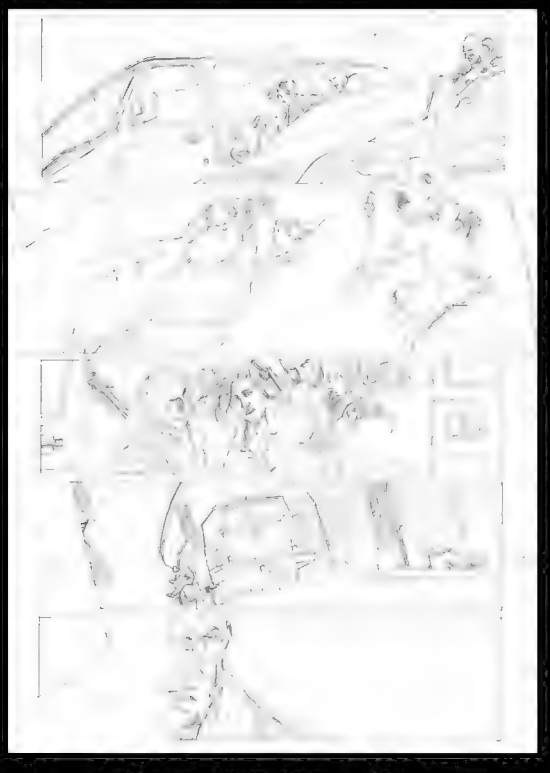

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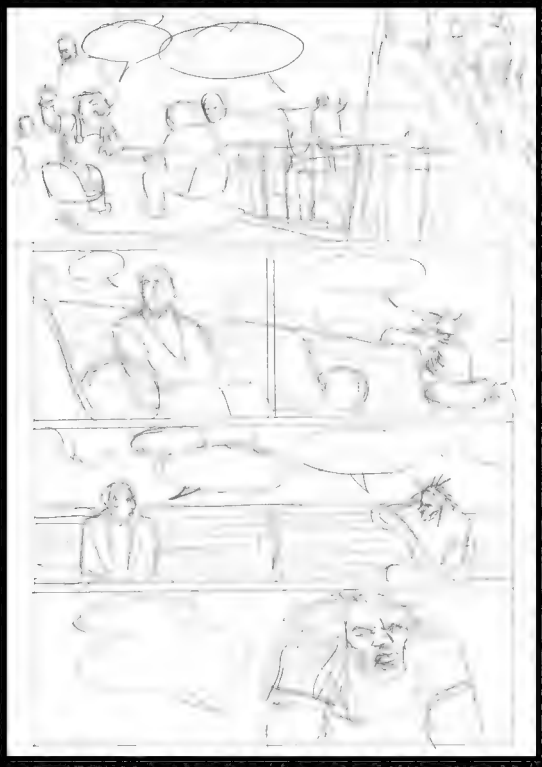

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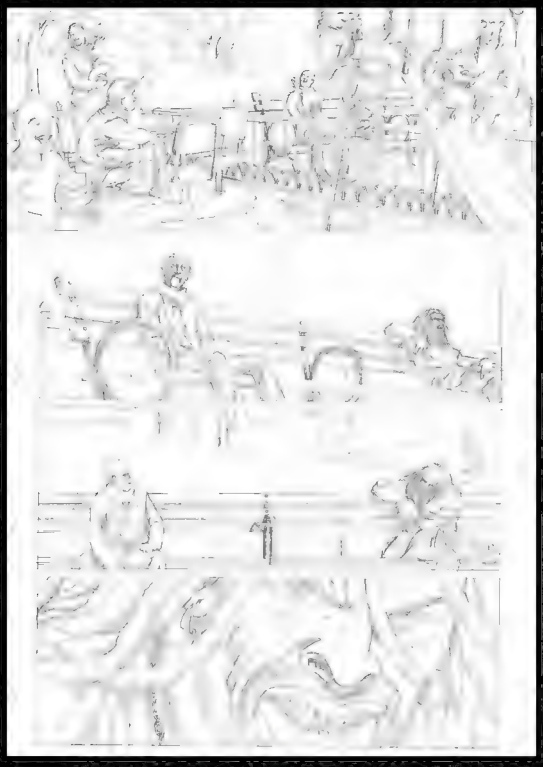

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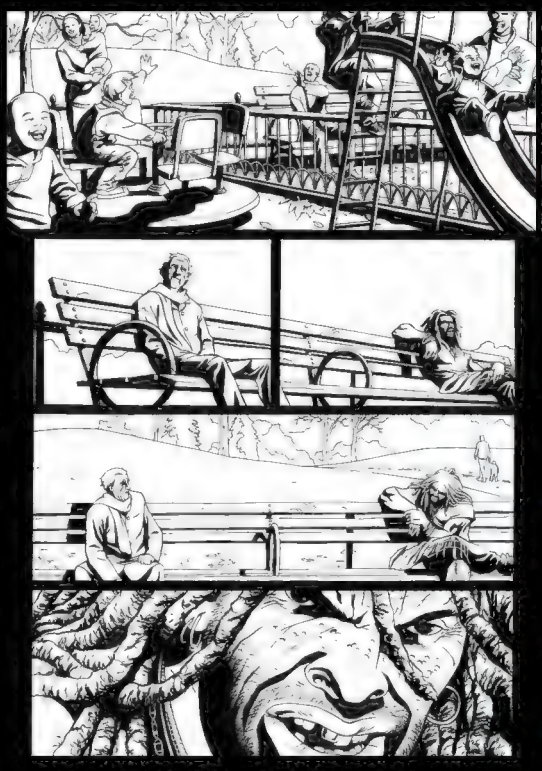

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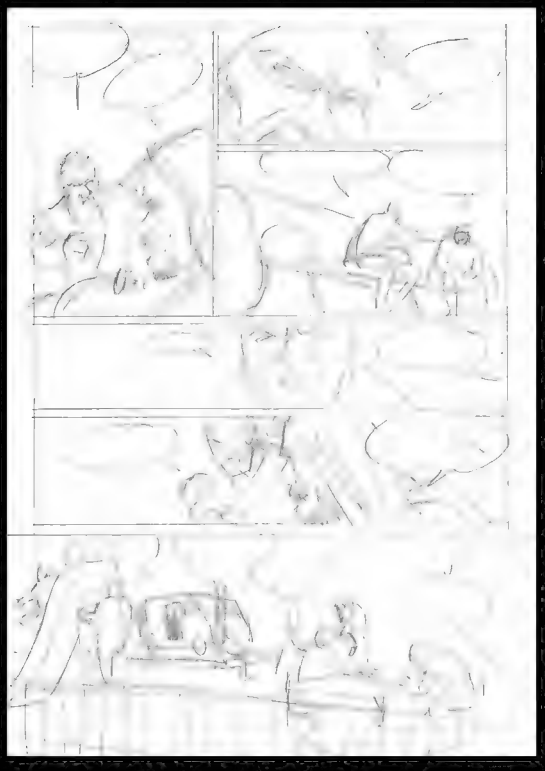

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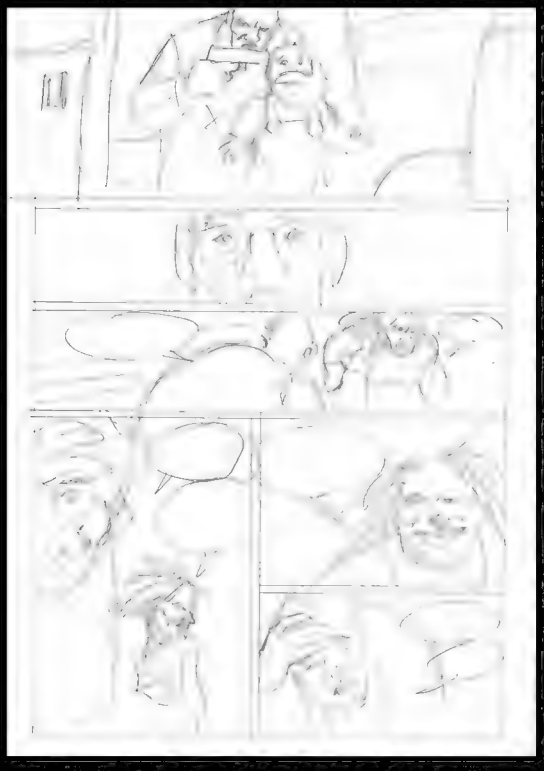

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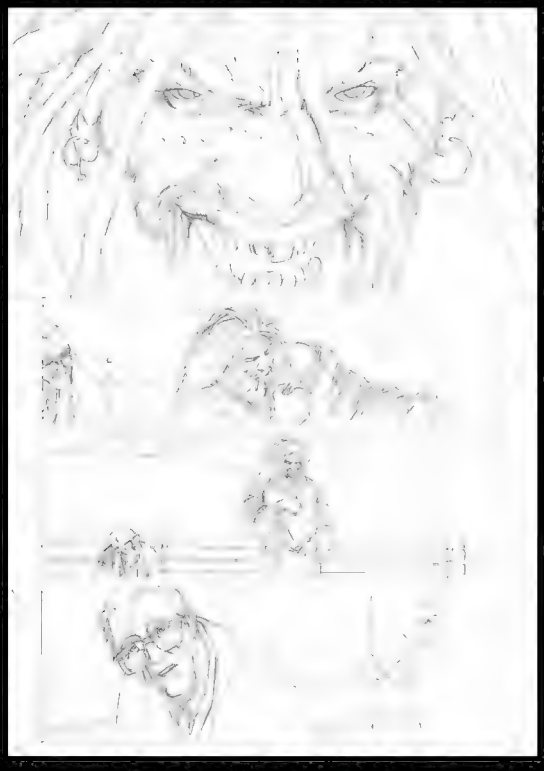

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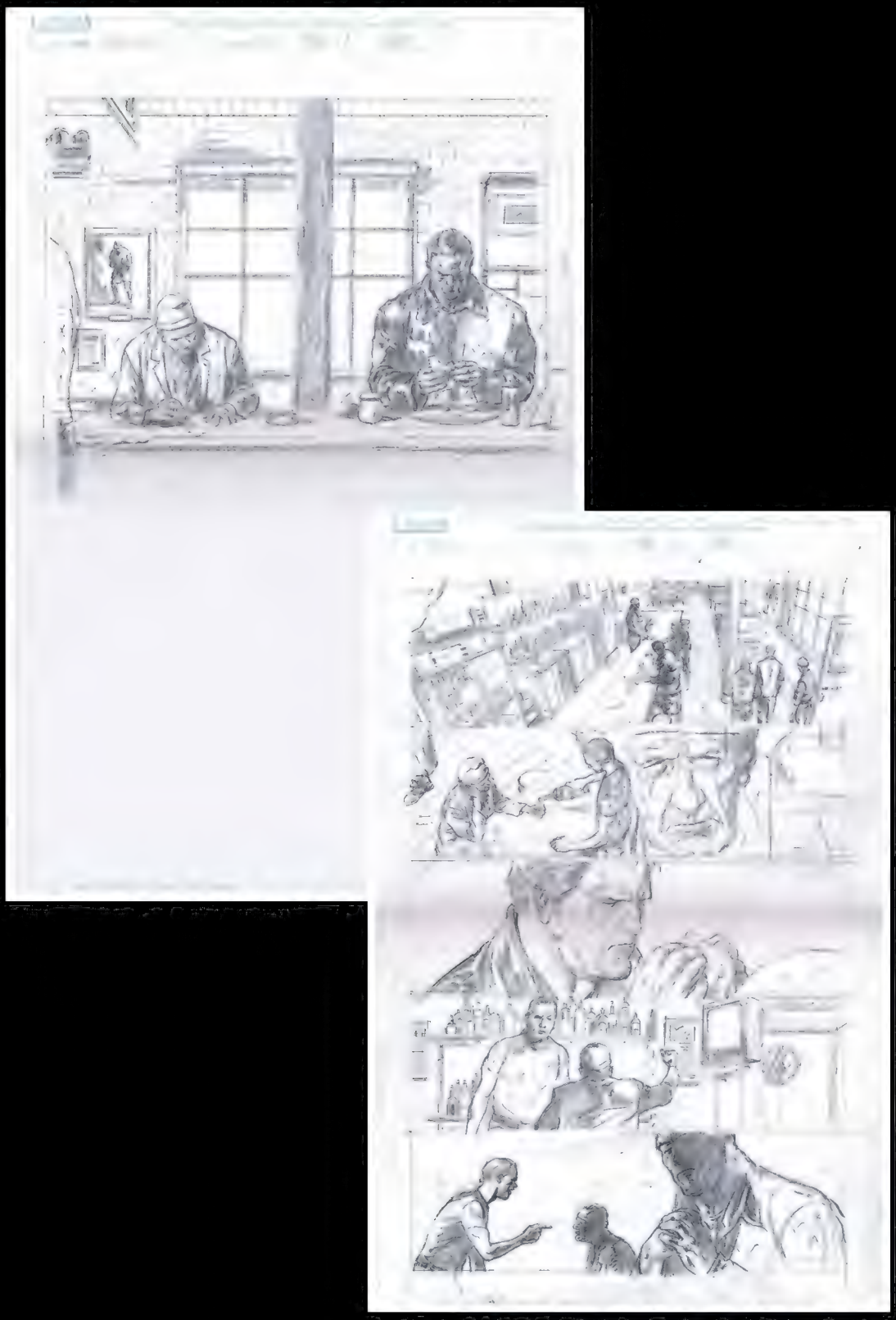
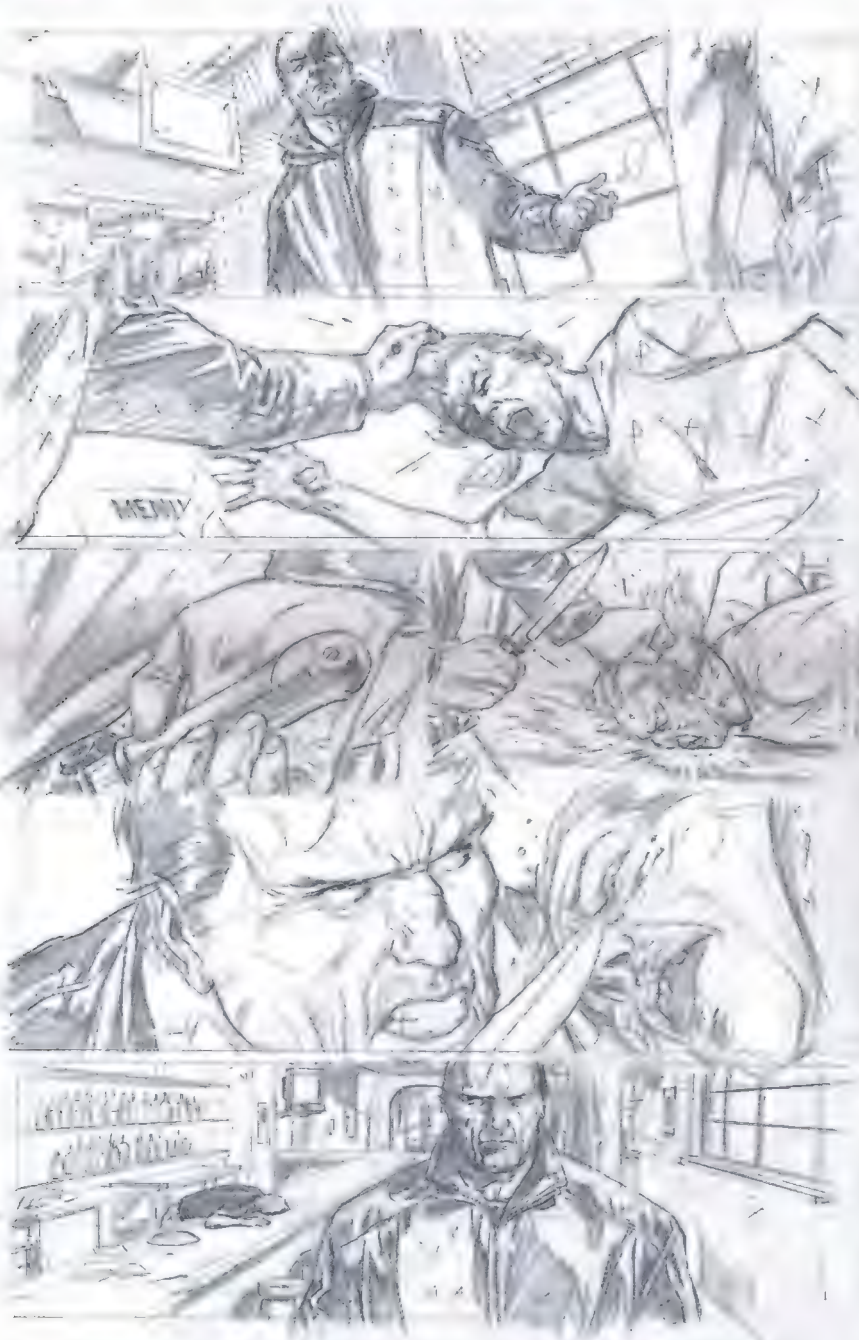
Page 22 Colors

PUNISHER #13, PP. 1-4

By Doug Braithwaite




MEMY

PUNISHER #23, PP. 16-18

By Leandro Fernández & Scott Hanna

PUNISHER 23 17 LEANDRO FERNÁNDEZ

PUNISHER 23 18 LEANDRO FERNÁNDEZ

FROM 2003 TO 2008, WRITER GARTH ENNIS WORKED WITH SOME OF THE BEST ARTISTS IN COMICS to produce an unforgettable run on *The Punisher*. Now, Marvel presents a new two-volume omnibus collection of the stories that changed the world of Frank Castle forever.

This first book presents the initial miniseries *Born* and the stories "In the Beginning," "Kitchen Irish," "Mother Russia," "Up Is Down and Black Is White" and "The Slavers" — with art by Darick Robertson, Lewis LaRosa, Leandro Fernández and Doug Braithwaite.

Collecting *Born #1-4* and *Punisher #1-30*.

EXPLICIT CONTENT

MARVEL

MEPHISTO